NEA Today
The Newspaper for Members of the National Education Association
May 1999
Vol. 17, No. 8
Washington, D.C.

ESP Of the Year

As attendance coordinator and community liaison at Oregon's Eagle Point High School, Gail Rasmussen helps keep kids in school.

See page 36.

Dean Guernsey

Also Inside:

✔ Newsmakers: From Aide to Teacher, page 10

✔ Inside Scoop: ESP Salaries, page 19

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What We Earn: A National Perspective

Few would disagree that support personnel play key roles in keeping schools running smoothly, but support staff pay often doesn't match up with their responsibilities. Below are average hourly wages for the nine ESP job categories.

Annie Hutchinson keeps food service running smoothly at E. L. Connally Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia.

Johnny Crawford

1996-1997 Average Hourly Wage

Jeff Kaitfors keeps things cool as a custodian at Spearfish (South Dakota) Public High School.

Jet Photo

Megan Link, library clerk, and Barbara Sieber, instructional assistant, team up for kids at Sycamore Park Elementary School in Culpeper, Virginia.

Joe Di Dio

Gloria Avalos tracks student progress as an education assistant at Washington Elementary Schools in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Liz Ward

In 1996-97, the average hourly wage for NEA K-12 ESP members who are paid by the hour was $10.50. The average annual salary for those paid on that basis was $17,469. This chart, and others shown here, is adapted from materials prepared by Carolyn Summers, NEA Research.

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Move over, Amazon.com
The NEA Professional Library is on the Web!
See page 40

Inclusion Confusion

How will the new law on students with disabilities affect Cathy Buhrman's classroom — and yours? The answer starts page 4.

NEA Today

May 1999
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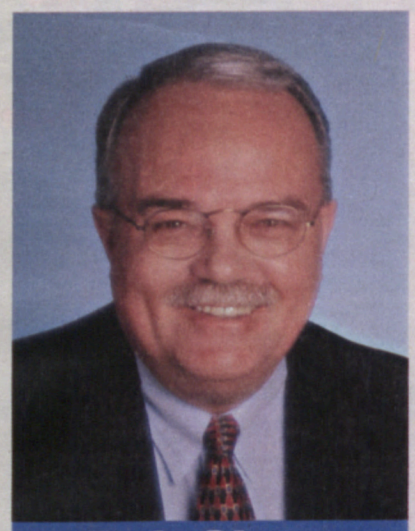
Strutting Our Stuff!

President's Viewpoint

The motto of our new NEA should be: "Lead, follow, and get out of the way."



Bob Chase

"Watch what we do, not what we say." That was my challenge to reporters at the National Press Club in 1997, when I introduced our vision for a "reinvented" NEA—an NEA with a sharp emphasis on quality, professionalism, and, wherever possible, union-management cooperation.

Thanks to you, we have made good on our side of that challenge. Indeed, during the first week of March, the entire country got a look at the new NEA in action.

The week began with our spectacularly successful Read Across America Day on March 2.

News reports by Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw, and Peter Jennings spotlighted the Cat in the Hat as the star of Read Across America. But, in truth, the Cat had lots of help.

More than a million NEA members flexed their creativity and initiative to make this a huge celebration of reading, with more than 20 million children participating nationwide.

To all of you who worked so hard to make Read Across America a success in your community, I say thank you. In a million small ways, you made a big difference in the lives of the children we teach.

Two days later, on March 4, I returned to the National Press Club to give reporters a progress report on NEA's New Unionism.

As I told the luncheon audience—and those listening on National Public Radio or watching C-SPAN: "I return to this forum to be held accountable, to report to you that the new NEA is not just concept, it's also bicep—it's a concrete reality in countless school districts across this country."

Once again, I owe NEA members at the grassroots a very big thank you, because Exhibit A in my presentation to the National Press Club was a book documenting hundreds of your local innovations and initiatives.

You can check out the full text of *Stepping Forward: How NEA Members Are Revitalizing America's Public Schools* on our Web site at www.nea.org/newunion/stepfwd/.

It's no coincidence that the lion's share of these initiatives involve things like mentoring, peer assistance, peer review, National Board certification, professional development, and bargaining for quality.

> The new NEA is not just concept, it's also bicep—it's a concrete reality in school districts across this country.

After all, this is the crux of NEA's new focus: enhancing the quality and professionalism of teachers and other school employees—giving all of our members the skills they need to help students succeed.

As I said at the National Press Club: "I sometimes think the motto of our new NEA should be: "Lead, follow, and get out of the way."

By all means, our Association must lead—we must turn up the heat nationally for the right changes in public education.

But, just as importantly, we need to follow—to follow the lead of NEA members who are doing new and difficult things such as interest-based bargaining and co-management of their schools.

And at the same time—let me be frank—NEA also needs to get out of the way. We can't allow union sacred cows to block the path of members who want to pursue their own vision of school quality and reform.

Don't misunderstand me. Our Association's traditional roles remain extremely important. For example, we will always have a core duty to protect our members from arbitrary, abusive treatment at the hands of school districts. And we will continue to fight for decent pay and working conditions for all school employees.

But our Association is not an either/or proposition. We must be true to these traditional duties *and* we must advance an aggressive new agenda of quality and professionalism.

As the events of early March abundantly demonstrate, NEA has seized the initiative. We are accomplishing big things.

On a personal note, as I near the end of my third year as NEA president, it's exhilarating to behold this new spirit. But I am under no illusions as to my role in this renewal.

We are a far-flung, decentralized organization. And, though I have a bully pulpit to articulate a vision and a direction, my actual powers are circumscribed.

It is you who are revitalizing NEA from the grassroots up, in each of your local Associations and school districts. Our success is being driven by your initiative, your leadership, your courage. And for that I am both proud and deeply grateful.

Comments? Send them directly to me at BobChase@nea.org.

NEA at a Glance

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Did You Know...
That the NEA headquarters in Washington, D.C., is now hosting the most in-depth exhibition yet assembled on technology and education. The product of a successful partnership between NEA and a score of businesses, *TECH: Making the Grade* will soon be available for viewing on the World Wide Web. For details, pay a visit to www.makingthegrade.org.

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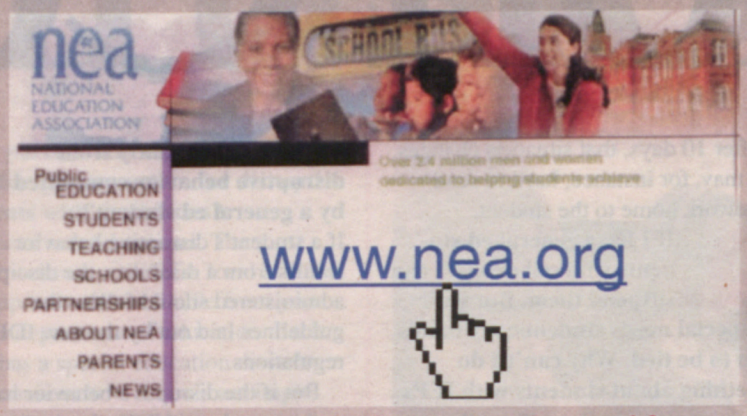

Water's Fine Online

Take a dip at www.nea.org, NEA's Web site, and you'll find everything you need to stay afloat—including practical classroom tips from colleagues, legislative updates from Washington, books from the NEA Professional Library, grant information from NEA's foundation, links to education research, and much more.

Cover Story

Patrick Raycraft

4 Inclusion Confusion
NEA member Cathy Buhrman (above) teaches 16 first graders—some with disabilities, some without—at Hayestown Elementary in Danbury, Connecticut. Like millions of other educators and parents, Buhrman wants to know how the new federal law on students with disabilities will affect her students and her classroom. So *NEA Today* gathered the experts and got answers. On pages 4, 5, and 6, you'll find out how new regulations address issues of discipline, paperwork, and the involvement of general education teachers on IEP teams.

Cover photo by Patrick Raycraft

Newsmakers

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Inclusion Co

Equal educational opportunity for all. The concept may sound simple, but implementation certainly isn't. Will the new federal law on students with disabilities make things better for all students—or only some?

A generation ago, few classrooms in the United States included students with disabilities. As late as the mid-1970s, an estimated 1 million kids with disabilities weren't even attending school.

Today, children with disabilities are no longer shunted aside and ignored, thanks largely to a string of federal legislative initiatives that began back in 1975.

These federal statutes have changed the face of American education. But they've also created confusion in countless classrooms across America, as educators, parents, and communities have struggled to provide quality education for both special *and* general education students.

Two years ago, NEA helped prod Congress to improve the federal legislation that governs special education—the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA—and the new version of this law enacted in 1997 did make improvements.

But the new IDEA also left many questions unanswered, questions that couldn't be answered until the U.S. Department of Education issued final regulations on how the new law should be implemented.

In March, after receiving feedback from NEA and literally thousands of other groups and individuals, the Department of Education released the final regulations.

What will these new regs mean for your school and your students? *NEA Today*'s Karen Gutloff looks at that impact in three long-debated areas: discipline, paperwork, and the involvement of general ed teachers in IEP—Individualized Education Program—teams.

Discipline and the New IDEA

The just-released regulations for implementing the new IDEA enacted in 1997 significantly expand the flexibility schools have for dealing with disruptive students.

Q. I have a disruptive student with disabilities who constantly undermines my ability to teach. How do the new IDEA regulations help me deal with this student?

The new regulations offer educators more options in the disciplinary action that can be taken with disruptive special needs students.

The IDEA law passed in 1997 gave schools the authority to remove a child for up to 10 days. The regulations released this past March clarify this "10-day rule." It's now clear that a disruptive special needs student can be removed from a classroom for more than 10 school days.

Q. Under the new IDEA, does a school have to provide home instruction and services to a student who has been suspended?

Schools do not need to provide home services to a suspended special needs student during the first 10 school days of a suspension.

After 10 days, that situation changes. You may, for instance, have to send homework home to the student.

Q. If I have general ed students who sell drugs, I can suspend them. But with my special needs students, my hands seem to be tied. Why can't I do something about students with IEPs who commit a similar offense?

Under the new IDEA, you *can* do something. Students with disabilities who bring guns, drugs, or weapons to school can be placed in an alternative setting for up to 45 days by a school administrator—even over a parent's objection.

Alternative placement allows time for an IEP team to review the offense and decide on the appropriate long-term placement.

An alternative placement could be home instruction or a facility run by the school district. In any case, if you expel a special needs student, you still need to provide the student educational services.

Q. When does disruptive behavior by a student with a disability need to be treated differently from disruptive behavior committed by a general ed student?

If a student's disruptive behavior results from a disability, the discipline administered should follow the guidelines laid out by the new IDEA regulations.

But if the disruptive behavior has nothing to do with a student's disability, that student can be disciplined under the same school policies that apply to general ed students.

If a student with a math disability, for instance, suddenly shouts out in class, that student should be accorded normal disciplinary treatment, because the disruptive behavior isn't linked to the disability.

On the other hand, if a student with Tourette's Syndrome shouts out, that action should be treated differently because it's disability-linked.

But, even in cases where a disability link exists, a disruptive student can still be put in an alternative placement for 45 days, while the student's IEP team decides how best to handle the situation.

Cathy Buhrman, a first grade teacher in Danbury, Connecticut, wants to make sure all her students have a chance to learn.

Q. Can a disruptive student who completes a 45-day alternative placement be returned to my classroom even if I still feel the student is a danger to me—or another student?

If, at the end of 45 days in alternative placement, a student is still considered dangerous by school officials, these officials can request a hearing, in front of a special hearing officer, to request an additional 45 days.

If this process should end with a decision that directs you to accept a special needs student who still threatens you, you should take the same steps you would take if you were directed to accept a general ed student you felt threatened by. That is, you should contact your NEA local affiliate and seek assistance.

Q. What if my school's administrators are so worried about lawsuits

Handling Discipline: An IDEA Timeline

Imagine the scene. You have a class of 27 students that includes one child with disabilities. Everything seems to go along fine until one day when this child shoves a chair into another student. How can you, as an educator, restore order to your class, both in the short- and long-term? What are your options for disciplining the misbehaving student under the new IDEA regulations? Here's one scenario about how this discipline problem, now that the new regs are in place, could be handled.

MONDAY
A student with disabilities stands up in class and shoves a chair into another student.
The misbehaving student is counseled about his behavior.
TUESDAY
The student returns to class. Things go well, then, just before lunch, the student picks up a chair and hurls it across the room, injuring a classmate.
The misbehaving student is again counseled and his parents notified.
The staff, realizing the situation is more serious than at first thought, meet to go over their options.
A. The school can have the student removed, on a short-term basis, for up to 10 days.
OR

nfusion

Photographs by Patrick Raycraft

Students with and without disabilities in Cathy Buhrman's first grade class can count on individual attention. The class only has 16 students. But most educators confront situations far less supportive.

from parents that they won't allow any disciplinary action for disruptive students with disabilities?
You have several options. The most direct: contact your NEA local affiliate.

Support is also available from your state's department of education. Each state has a special education division that monitors how schools are implementing the new IDEA.

You can contact this office to file a complaint. Check the NEA Web site at www.nea.org/publiced/idea for a list of the monitors in each state.

IEPs and the New IDEA

Before the 1997 reauthorization of the IDEA, general ed teachers did not have the automatic right to participate in IEP meetings for special ed students. Under the new regulations, if a special needs student is in a general education program, the general ed teachers involved have a clear right to have input on the IEP team.

Q. Some special needs students in my high school have six different general ed teachers. Do all of us have to attend the IEP meetings for these students?
Where there is more than one general education teacher for a student, the principal decides which teacher should attend the IEP meeting. But the teacher has to be a person providing direct services to the student.

Q. If I am providing direct services, do I have to attend every IEP meeting? I just don't have the time.
You can't be forced to attend every IEP session. According to the regulations, decisions about participation in an IEP meeting should be made on a case-by-case basis.

If an IEP meeting is about speech therapy, for example, and you don't deliver speech therapy services, you don't have to be there. Similarly, if the student is dyslexic, the principal may ask the reading and social studies teachers to be on hand, but not the physical education teacher.

The new regulations also offer options for participating on an IEP team. A teacher, for instance, may be able to submit written reports.

Q. In an IEP meeting, how much weight does my opinion carry, as a general education teacher, if the parents in the meeting disagree?
No one individual on an IEP team determines an outcome. It's the whole IEP team that makes a determination.

Q. Will I be given release time to attend IEP meetings?
The regulations do not guarantee release time. Many NEA locals have bargained provisions for IEP release time, just as they've bargained provisions for other extra or after-school time NEA members are asked to spend on school business.

The Connecticut Education Association has bargained strong model contract language on release time for participating in IEP meetings. You can check this language by visiting www.nea.org/publiced/idea.

Paperwork and the New IDEA

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that the new IDEA regulations will save millions of tax dollars by reducing the amount of required paperwork.

Q. I have an IEP that went from three pages to 29 *after* the 1997 IDEA law. Will these new regulations add even more paperwork to my load?
Nothing in the new regulations should increase the amount of paperwork you're required to handle. If states follow federal guidelines, there should be no extra paperwork whatsoever.

So why have some NEA members been seeing increased paperwork since 1997? The problem is that every state and district may choose to implement the IEP requirements differently.

NEA is now working with state departments of education to develop and circulate model language for an effective IEP that's not paperwork intensive.

Q. Am I required to give more frequent progress reports to parents under the new regulations?
You are required to provide progress reports for students with special needs as often as you report on general ed students. If you report on a general education student's progress quarterly or on a trimester basis, you can do that for special needs students as well.

Q. Am I still required to test for a student's disability every three years?
No. You don't have to do this testing unless a parent requests it, or unless you're contemplating a change in a student's classroom placement.

B. The student's IEP team can meet to discuss the appropriateness of the student's placement in a class with regular education students.

OR

C. The school can request a hearing officer to order that the child be removed to an alternative placement for up to 45 days.

The school chooses to pursue option C.

FRIDAY
After a discussion with school officials, the hearing officer orders a 45-day alternative placement because she agrees with school officials that the child may be "substantially likely to injure himself or others."

TWO WEEKS LATER
The student's IEP team, including the class teacher and the parents, meet to determine whether his misbehavior is related to his disability. They develop a plan that identifies the interventions needed to address future misbehavior and discuss whether placement in a regular classroom is still appropriate.

THREE WEEKS LATER
The 45-day period is nearing a close. The school could ask, under the IDEA regulations, for a 45-day extension, but the teacher is eager to try the behavior modification plan that emerged out of the IEP meeting several weeks before.

The student remains home until the hearing.

The student is ordered to a 45-day alternative placement.

The student returns to the classroom, and the IEP plan is put into effect.

Assessing the New IDEA

Few NEA members have devoted more energy to improving the IDEA than Ed Amundson (right), the chair of NEA's Caucus for Educators of Exceptional Children. Over recent years, Amundson has worked to sensitize federal officials to classroom realities and met regularly with NEA members nationwide to help them answer questions just like these.

What's the first thing educators should be doing, now that the IDEA regulations are out?

Educators need to sit down with their special education directors and look at how to deliver services under the law. Faculty and staff also need to educate their administrators about what the law actually says.

Do your research, get the information, then form a committee or group to explore how to implement IDEA in the most effective way.

You fought long and hard for new IDEA legislation. In the end, did we get a good law?

The 1997 law definitely has its heart in the right place: providing the best practice and best services for kids. And the law does strengthen and protect the rights of all educational stakeholders in the process—students, teachers, and parents.

The problem is implementation at the state and local levels. We have to be vigilant to make sure the rules are followed.

What if administrators skirt the regulations and don't follow the new rules?

Unfortunately, you can't legislate backbone. But there are channels you can go through to make sure your district goes along with what the new law and the new regulations say.

Each state, for instance, has a special monitor in place to make sure districts are complying with the regulations.

But we don't have to depend on state officials to get relief. In cases where administrators won't follow the regulations, educators should do what we do when we have a problem that has nothing to do with IDEA. We should organize, through our local NEA affiliates, to remedy the situation.

So don't be afraid to contact your NEA local if your district is falling short, just as you would contact your local on any other workplace issue.

How can educators more effectively deal with parents in the IEP process?

It's a huge mistake to view parents as adversaries in this process. Parents want what's best for their kids, and all of us as teachers and school staff want what's best for kids as well. We need to work together with parents as a team.

How will the new IDEA regulations help educators in the classroom?

I'm urging all my colleagues to get hold of these regulations and educate themselves about the law. Through our Association advocacy, we were able to win a number of good provisions.

Remember, improving IDEA isn't just about improving discipline and paperwork provisions. It's about making a good civil rights law work better for teachers, students, and parents.

What about educators who feel simply overwhelmed by the prospect of reading regulations?

Well, if you're already doing a good job meeting the needs of special education students and have things under control in your classroom, not much is going to change for you with these new regulations. You may not need to take the time to learn more about them.

But if you're frustrated by the way inclusion works now in your school, if you feel under siege, if you are denied the support you need to do a good job for all students, then I think you should pay attention to these new regulations. You'll find that what's here can help you significantly.

Ed Amundson and Diane Shust, NEA's top lobbyist on IDEA issues, are available on the Web all this month to answer your questions about the new IDEA. To pose a question, visit the NEA Today Web site at www.nea.org/neatoday/9905/idea/ and tap in your query. Or you can send E-mail to Amundson at neaseeker@aol.com.

NEA Working To Make IDEA Work

Over recent years, few issues on Capitol Hill have engaged NEA more than the need to improve the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

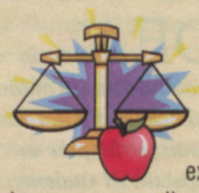
In 1997, during the Congressional debate over the reauthorization of IDEA, and again this past year, during the drafting of regulations for implementing IDEA, NEA has worked with educators nationwide to press for new provisions that support effective classroom professional practice.

Now, with the final IDEA regulations in place, NEA is working, on a variety of fronts, to help educators master the new opportunities IDEA offers:

- NEA is partnering with the U.S. Department of Education to develop a model IEP for educators to follow.
- The Association has also joined with the American Federation of Teachers and the Council for Exceptional Children to create a new group called Associations of Service Providers Implementing IDEA Reforms in Education (ASPIIRE). The group will be providing accurate information about IDEA to every school site and ensuring that data on successful programs is widely disseminated.
- NEA is sharing with state affiliates updated analyses of the IDEA regulations that note the positions NEA fought for during the regulation-drafting process and the changes between the original and final regs. For a copy of this analysis, visit the NEA Web site at www.nea.org/publiced/idea.
- NEA is completing a state-by-state study of how the IDEA is being implemented throughout the country. The study details each state's special education regulations.
- In late May, the NEA will be hosting a one-day national conference on understanding the IDEA regulations for state affiliates.
- The upcoming NEA Representative Assembly this July in Orlando, Florida, will feature a forum where members can pose questions about IDEA regulations and their impact on the classroom.

Resources

- Check out the NEA Web site for information on obtaining copies of the new IDEA regulations. The site also features information on how the IDEA regs impact classroom educators. The address: www.nea.org/publiced/idea.
- Download the actual IDEA '97 law or look up background information on the Department of Education Web page. Log on to www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA/index.html.
- The IDEA Practices Web site points to *IDEAs That Work* and other information on implementing IDEA '97. The site also explores the legal issues surrounding the new regulations. Visit the site on the Web at www.ideapractices.org.



- Written by teachers, the NEA Professional Library's *Toward Inclusive Classrooms* shows how teachers at all grade levels are integrating students with special needs into regular classrooms. $9.95 plus $2.50 s&h for NEA members. Stock #2903-8-00-F. To order, call 800/229-4200.
- The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities offers several free resources. For a free catalog, contact NICHCY, P.O. Box 1492, Washington, DC 20013-1492, 800/695-0285. You can also find this material on the Web at www.nichcy.org.
- The Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) provides support and materials that can help implement the dispute resolution requirements in IDEA '97. Log on to www.directionservice.org/cadre.
- In *Creating Schools for All Our Students*, hear from 12 school-based inclusion teams that share their real-life experiences of integrating an inclusive approach. $13 plus $5 s&h for NEA members. Stock #1865-6-00-F. To order, call 800/229-4200.

On Capitol Hill

More Than Paint and Carpets

Need big bucks to modernize schools? Help may be on the way.

Take too close a look at the infrastructure needs of America's schools—conservatively pegged at $200 billion—and you may feel like Texas maintenance electrician Bill Harrison. When he recently lifted a suspended ceiling tile in a Fort Worth high school, he got drenched.

Harrison says he often sees the effects of trapped moisture in the Forth Worth district's 130 facilities, "like fungus and mold under walls and ceilings." And he works around "inadequate" ducts every day.

That's not to say that nobody cares. Recently the district—with the support of local politicians, the Chamber of Commerce, and NEA's local affiliate, the Fort Worth Consolidated Employees Association—won voter passage of a $398 million bond issue for school additions and renovations.

But will this new funding go far enough? Harrison thinks not. There are schools in Fort Worth, he says, that are installing new technology, while kitchens go without air conditioning and kids languish in portable classrooms.

Check in with NEA maintenance staffers in other districts, and you'll hear a tale of infrastructure needs outpacing available funding:

■ In Clark County, **Nevada**, senior school maintenance tech Alan Doty watches taxpayers routinely approve school building and renovation bonds.

But while new buildings pop up, the district's HVAC/refrigeration department remains 42 percent understaffed, and '50s-era kitchen refrigerators are tagged "beyond repair."

The short-staffing means less preventive maintenance—a fast track to instructional meltdown when the desert heat toasts rooftops to 150 degrees and cooling units break down.

Doty says an insufficient state tax base is part of the problem. But he also faults a mindset that equates school overhaul with "the facade of carpeting and painting, not renovation and maintenance of mechanical systems."

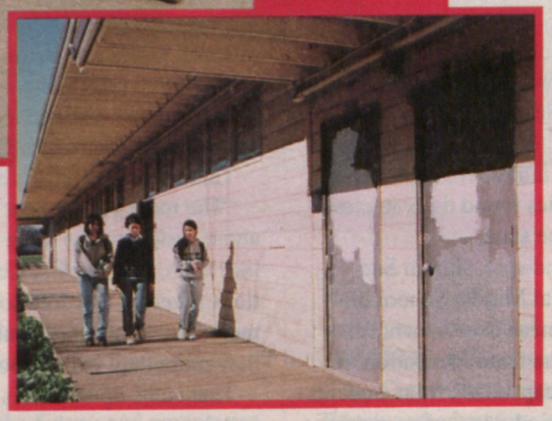
■ In Mobile County, **Alabama**, renovations foreman James Hilderbrand is unmoved by the governor's $300 million plan to replace some portable classrooms across the state.

Hilderbrand could easily spend $300 million in his district alone. Even with eight new schools, Mobile County still has 560 portables.

There won't be help any time soon from local taxpayers. They've rejected property tax increases since 1965.

These three NEA members need all the funding help they can get from Washington, D.C. Here's what's likely.

■ **Federal grants for school construction or renovation aren't in the cards.** "In 1993, we won a program for school construction grants, but it was never funded," says NEA lobbyist Joel Packer. "And it's unlikely we'll get significant grant money under the current stringent budget rules."



These schools in Minnesota (left) and California are, unfortunately, typical. They need repairs—and they need them now.

■ **But legislation *is* moving ahead to subsidize school bond interest.** NEA is backing several bills patterned after S.223—the Public School Modernization Act—introduced by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-New Jersey).

This legislation would provide federal tax credits to pay the interest costs for $25 billion in school modernization bonds issued by states and local school districts. Such bonds could be used for repairs, renovation, or new construction.

This measure would generate big bucks. "It would leverage a five-year federal outlay of $3.1 billion into $25 billion of construction spending," says Bob Canavan, president of the broad-based Rebuild America's Schools Coalition.

■ **Bond subsidy legislation can preserve local control.** A nearly identical "Qualified Zone Academy Bond" program—which has generated $800 million since 1997—offers local decision making without federal or state bureaucracy.

■ **The public is ready to support legislation like this.** In a nationwide survey conducted by Republican pollster Frank Luntz, 82 percent of Americans say they favor a five-year, $22 billion proposal to help districts repair, renovate, and modernize schools.

What You Can Do

Point your Web browser to NEA's online Legislative Action Center at www.nea.org/lac for instructions on how to contact your members of Congress. Be specific about the needs of your school—be it modernization, class size reduction, or professional development.

Heroes & Zeroes

An all-star salute to General Colin Powell, who continues to deliver on America's Promise—his campaign to recruit volunteers to improve the lives of children. Recently, American General Financial Group pledged to give each of its 30,000 employees two hours of paid time off per month to pursue community service activities that benefit kids. A welcome time-out!

For giving "promise" a bad name, a Sorrowful Scam Award to Texas businessman Val Adams, who pledged renewable $10,000 college scholarships to 51 students. Soon after the students started their college careers, Adams reneged, saying his company would "not be financially able to honor scholarships." There's a lesson in there for parents tempted by privately funded vouchers.

Blooming backpacks, Batman! Teachers in Colorado are collecting school supplies and backpacks and donating them to the Family Tree Organization for needy students. So far, members of the Jefferson County International Reading Association have donated more than 300 packs, but many more are needed. For details, send E-mail to dmcquire@jeffco.k12.co.us.

What's so funny about *Killing Mrs. Tingle*, a summer movie from Miramax about "the murderous (and comic) lengths kids go to get good grades"? Don't know—and won't pay to find out!

Need a serum for senior slump? Tell your students that if the national Making Academics Count campaign is successful this spring, 10,000 employers will pledge this summer to use student records as part of their hiring process. Behind the effort: the National Alliance of Business, a raft of other national business groups, education organizations including NEA, and the Ad Council. Make room for a new bumper sticker: "Business on Board."

In the States

Voucher Backer No More

Private school tuition vouchers have been a disaster for Milwaukee public schools, Wisconsin State Senate President Gary George—a former voucher supporter—said at a spring Indiana State House rally for public schools and against vouchers.

George reported that vouchers have transferred some $28 million from the Milwaukee district to students who were already in private schools.

The better way to improve public education, George told the crowd, is to lower class sizes.

At the rally, members of the Indiana State Teachers Association were joined by people from across the education community, various religious groups, civil libertarians, unions, the NAACP, the Urban League, Democratic and Republican politicians, and even private school representatives who wish to preserve religious liberty and private school autonomy.

New Voices for Bargaining

This winter, members of NEA Missouri came closer than they have in a generation to winning a collective bargaining law for public employees.

Before the bill died, these grassroots lobbyists gained some pretty impressive allies, including Governor Mel Carnahan and House Speaker Steve Gaw. "Teachers," Gaw said, "deserve to be treated as partners in every aspect of education."

Even some school administrators chimed in, endorsing non-confrontational interest-based bargaining.

"In districts that already enjoy good relationships between the school board and teachers, interest-based bargaining strengthens the relationship and gives you a new set of skills to work with," said Lee Brittenham, superintendent of the Francis Howell district. "You can continue to use these skills long after the bargaining process is over."

"The process itself does a lot to build trust and creates a better environment for kids," added Gary Stephens, assistant superintendent of the Northwest R-1 district.

A White Duck to the Rescue

NEA's Pennsylvania affiliate works to defeat vouchers yet again.

PSEA

How much can kids learn in the time it takes a duck to go from incubation to adulthood? The answer's part of a TV ad campaign sponsored by NEA's Pennsylvania affiliate.

They all walk and talk like ducks. Their promoters call them "parental choice grants" in Texas, "public education scholarships" in Florida, and "tuition tax credits" in Arizona, Illinois, and Missouri, but they all do the *same* thing—transfer public funds to private and religious schools.

Who better to ruffle their feathers than a white duck named Mr. Peepers?

Star of a commercial sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), Mr. Peepers focuses TV viewers on innovative approaches to teaching basics found daily in classrooms across the state.

The 30-second spot, shot in Sue Castle's Colonial Middle School biology classroom near Norristown, follows Mr. Peepers from incubation to adulthood and capsulizes what students learn in that period—including writing, calculating, biology, and the values of respect and responsibility.

Creative approaches like this one have helped the 147,000-member PSEA boost taxpayer confidence in public education and sidetrack Governor Tom Ridge's repeated crusades—one a year, since 1995—for vouchers.

This year, Ridge is proposing a five-year voucher plan for targeted districts that would dole out $587 million by the fifth year. He has also made "super-vouchers" a component of a proposed "Academic Recovery Act" focused on eight high-needs districts.

But the governor and his allies in the legislature continually make a critical mistake: Instead of writing a bill for the public to read and debate, they try to sneak voucher language through as amendments to *other* bills.

That works to PSEA's advantage.

"The more people hear from us about vouchers, the more they don't like them," says PSEA Communications Director Bill Johnson. "And the more they know about public schools, they more they will support them."

That sums up what this NEA affiliate is doing to protect and promote public education. Specifically, PSEA is:

■ **Bringing taxpayers into the public schools.** PSEA's Blue Ribbon Public Relations Campaign encourages the public to take a closer look at schools. A series of 60-second spots in each of the state's media markets feature classroom activities, while another commercial, jointly sponsored with the state PTA, encourages parents to be involved in their children's education.

■ **Bringing Association members into the community.** PSEA offers its local affiliates 3-to-1 matching grants for projects that involve members in community activities or help members demonstrate to neighbors what's working well in their schools.

■ **Maintaining a strong local presence.** PSEA posts communications specialists and organizers in eight local media markets. Among other things, these "COP" staffers monitor education coverage and public opinion, devise and deliver consistent Association messages, and help local affiliates deal with attacks on public education.

■ **Working in coalition with other voucher opponents.** PSEA belongs to the Pennsylvania Education Coalition to Oppose Tuition Vouchers, whose 40 members—from the NAACP to the League of Women Voters—lobby against vouchers. "We would have lost the voucher battle years ago without this coalition," says Johnson.

■ **Pushing for even better schools.** Since 1995, PSEA has promoted "Change That Works," a blueprint for improving schools through tested means, like class size reduction and increased parental involvement.

"We have made some progress toward our goals, but we have more to achieve," reports PSEA President David Gondak, a chemistry teacher.

"Our challenge is to stick to the job of improving schools without being diverted at every election cycle or by every political fad—like vouchers."

For More Information

Go to the Pennsylvania State Education Association's Web page at www.psea.org. For more on vouchers and tuition tax credits, go to nea.org/issues/vouchers/index.html.

The Bottom Line

Certification: The number of teachers seeking national certification has jumped from 1,983 last year to 7,244. Part of the reason: a new federal program that provides 50 percent of the certification fee. For more: www.nbpts.org.

Home schools: The author of the largest study of home-schooled students ever conducted says his findings do "not demonstrate that home schooling is superior to public or private schools." The research appears at http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v7n8/.

Parents: Only 4 percent of the nation's parents want to help choose school staff or curriculum. By contrast, 83 percent cite encouraging children to learn as their key education role. For more: www.publicagenda.org/specials/parent/parent.htm.

Internet access: The E-Rate—the NEA-backed federal program that helps schools link up to cyberspace—has moved $1.66 billion to the nation's classrooms this school year. Some 36,500 schools have applied for the next round of funding assistance.

At the Local Level

There's Just No Competition

What would you do if millionaires started handing out vouchers to your students?

Edgewood, near San Antonio, may be a low-wealth district—94 percent of its 13,300 students are economically disadvantaged—but parents and school staff are proud of their public schools.

They've got a nationally recognized special ed program, training partnerships with firms like Microsoft and American Airlines, programs for latchkey kids and pregnant teens, and three magnet high schools.

In 1989, a statewide funding equity lawsuit gave Edgewood educators the funding to improve facilities, technology, and training.

And the district is staying on track under the guidance of a progressive superintendent, Dolores Munoz, and a five-year strategic plan.

The results speak for themselves.

Edgewood has boosted test scores, kept all of its schools off the state's "low-performing" list, and brought down the dropout rate—from 13 percent in 1991 to 3.5 percent this year.

But a small group of wealthy business leaders pushing school vouchers is determined to undermine Edgewood's progress. Last fall, they launched a privately funded, $50 million "scholarship" plan directly targeted at the district's poorest students.

The money comes from the Children's Educational Opportunity (CEO) Foundation, established in 1994 by James Leininger, who made his millions manufacturing hospital beds.

Five years later, the CEO Foundation says it's funding "scholarships" in 30 cities, including Edgewood.

With its deep pockets, the foundation hands out annual stipends of up to $4,000 a year, for private or parochial school tuition. The basic political goal: Undermine public education and generate support, especially from low-income parents, for tax-supported vouchers.

In Edgewood, some 700 students have already taken the vouchers, a public school enrollment decline that will rob the district of $4 million in state funding next year.

Galvanized by this challenge, administrators, parents, and the 130 members of the Edgewood Classroom Teachers Association are hitting back.

With the community organizing and communications expertise of both NEA and the Texas State Teachers Association, Edgewood educators are coalescing to keep the district on the quality path and to publicize why Edgewood schools are the better choice for kids.

Increasingly, Edgewood parents are hearing that their public schools offer:

■ **Equal access to all students, regardless of ability or disability.** Ask special education teacher Karen Rodriguez how well inclusion works in Edgewood, and she'll tell you about a disabled second grader who takes dance classes in her wheelchair at a magnet high school for fine arts.

"Special ed students are included in all aspects of school life here," Rodriguez says, "like the special ed student who's a water boy for the high school football team."

Not true at Edgewood's voucher-supported private schools.

"The second grade dancer's mother tried and failed to get her daughter into a voucher school," says Rodriguez, the Edgewood CTA president. "The school had no ramps, no registered nurse to handle her catheterization, and no specialists."

■ **Accountability to parents.** The tightly knit Edgewood community is used to controlling public schools—through an elected school board—and watching over them. Parent volunteers, guided and trained by a paid parent liaison at each school, log some 100,000 hours of donated time a year.

■ **Committed, experienced staff.** Edgewood educators, many of them products of the district's schools, are loyal to the community, despite higher pay elsewhere in Texas.

"We have pride in our ability," stresses Rodriguez, "and we know our students can achieve." Her ultimate goal: to spread that pride in public education community-wide.

Roberta Barnes

Texas special education teacher Karen Rodriguez is proud of how well Edgewood public schools serve her students.

For More Information

Contact Edgewood school district communications director Edna Perez-Vega at 210/431-9146 or UniServ director Barbara Tauber at 210/271-3051.

Voucher 'Lottery'

Eager to create an appetite for tax-supported tuition vouchers, two of America's wealthiest men—financier Teddy Forstmann and John Walton, heir to the Wal-Mart millions—have created and partially funded the Children's Scholarship Fund. A CSF lottery this spring awarded private school "scholarships" to 40,000 low-income kids across the nation.

Now the "winners" enter another crap shoot: the admissions process.

In a survey of private schools, the U.S. Department of Education found that interest in participating in voucher schemes "would decline considerably" if the programs forced schools to accept students through random assignment, serve kids with special needs, participate in state assessments, and permit exemptions from religious instructions.

Edison Loses to the Facts

Armed with unflattering info on the for-profit Edison Project that she obtained at a national conference—and turned off by a slick, "nothing-negative" tour she took of an Edison school—a local Association leader returned home to successfully lobby against Edison's plans to manage a school in her North Carolina district.

Working with UniServ staff, Lisa Faulk, president of the NEA local affiliate in Winston-Salem/Forsyth, researched an Edison information packet for the school board.

Faulk "saturated" board members with these findings, and even persuaded two of them to accompany her to Edison's only North Carolina school, located in Goldsboro.

Faulk also granted media interviews on the Edison Project and gave community leaders a way to contact the company and parents of children in its schools. And she involved education professors and students in Edison research, and ran phone and letter-writing campaigns.

The result: The school board voted 5-4 in favor of keeping Edison out of district schools.

"Ultimately," concludes Faulk, "this was the best decision we could have made for the children."

Kids and welfare: Getting families off welfare, a new study shows, doesn't automatically get kids out of poverty. A third of poor children live in families where parents have jobs that pay wages that don't reach the poverty line. For more, www.childtrends.org.

Lawmakers: The number of lawyers serving in state legislatures is down sharply since 1969, from 22 to 16 percent. Teachers fill 7 percent of state legislative seats, a figure just about the same as the 1969 level. Eight percent of state legislators are now retirees.

Health costs: Managed care organizations have hiked premium rates up by 7 to 10 percent so far in 1999. On average, for all types of health plans, the cost of providing family coverage now costs large businesses $5,652 annually per employee.

Infants: Accidents have replaced disease as the leading cause of death among very young children. Overall, notes the Child Welfare League of America, infant mortality is down from 29 deaths per 1,000 births in 1950 to 7 deaths per 1,000 today.

On the Cutting Edge

Pathways: National Model
The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund's Pathways to Learning Careers program, which helps people become teachers, was established in 1989 and is now in 25 states.

When Congress reauthorized the Higher Education Act last year, it modeled a teacher recruitment partnership grant—Section 204—after what it called the "highly successful Pathways to Learning Careers program."

Head-To-Head With Edison
In Connecticut, the Waterbury Teachers Association and school board have negotiated contract language requiring the district to fund a teacher-operated school under the same terms it negotiated with the Edison Project to run a local elementary school.

The pilot school, to be run by WTA members, will emphasize alternative approaches to education and be independent of the central office.

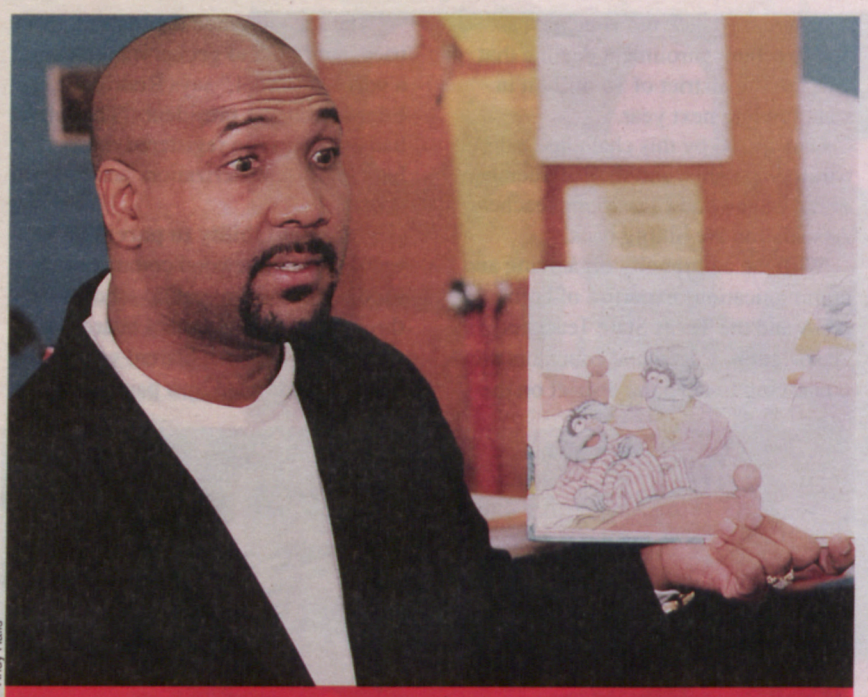
"The school board's decision to open this teacher-run school shows that it recognizes the educational expertise of teachers," notes WTA President Jack Cronan.

In Health Care, They Trust
With start-up money from the Heinz Family Philanthropies, representatives of Pennsylvania public school employers and employees—including NEA's 147,000-member state affiliate—have created a nongovernmental health care trust equally controlled by both parties.

Trust managers, seeking health cost savings through large-group participation and effective administration, will:

- Design cost-effective, high quality plans for more than 200,000 school employees and retirees.
- Identify providers that can deliver these plans, and then offer the plans by the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year.
- Monitor care delivery and challenge plans to continually improve.
- Publicize the performance of each health plan to help employees choose the best option available.

New Faces in the Profession



Andy Hall's

Darryl Arms, once a school support employee, got the help he needed to fulfill his dream of becoming a teacher.

An Alabama State University program helps bring minorities and ESP into the teaching ranks.

Before he changed professions, Alabama NEA member Darryl Arms saw a side of children that teachers don't often see.

As a nuclear medical technician, Arms had known dying young cancer patients as "little people with the same emotions and conflicts as adults."

Later, as a Montgomery County in-school suspension coordinator, Arms met students who "thought that teachers didn't care about them and wanted them out of class."

These experiences, which would later benefit Arms, were a bit too much to bear at the age of 30. "I went home unhappy every day and felt like I was in a rut," he recalls.

Then something happened that Arms says "saved my life." This support staffer and sometime sub got a chance to become what he always wanted to be: a certified teacher.

In 1993, Arms was one of the first noncertified Montgomery County school employees—teaching assistants, subs, and provisionally certified educators—to enter the Pathways to Teaching Program at Alabama State University-Montgomery.

For a support employee with bills to pay, the evening Pathways program—80 percent funded by the DeWitt-Wallace Reader's Digest Fund (see side column), and 20 percent by the university—was a godsend.

Pathways covered most of Arms's tuition and book costs, made instructors and facilities available after classes, and offered adjustment assistance through counseling/mentoring, workshops, and on-campus child care.

With this support, Arms received his Masters of Education in 1995 and became a second grade teacher at Montgomery's Seth Johnson School.

Once on the job, Arms got further backing from the Alabama Education Association—from instructional advice to AEA's new teacher handbook.

All of this support paid off. Arms, like 95 percent of Pathways graduates, "got tenure, plus good evaluations," stresses program director Allen Stewart, an NEA member.

Pathways—now open to *all* qualified school support employees—is bringing needed diversity to this low-wealth urban district, where minorities are 73 percent of the student population and 40 percent of the teaching force.

In the process, the Montgomery County district is learning that:

- **Minority kids can connect well with minority teachers.** Arms, now a kindergarten teacher at Seth Johnson School, mined his own past experience to transform his very first class—tough, supposedly "unteachable" second graders—into little studiers.

"I talked to them about respect," he recalls, "about how education is the most important thing in their life, and how I believed in them. They knew I *cared* and started respecting me."

"It's important to get more Black males in the profession, especially in the lower grades," Arms stresses. "Children can see someone who mirrors themselves, a positive role model who is a success in their eyes."

- **Support employees can add a whole new dimension to teaching.** Allen Stewart notes that former support staffers "bring maturity and nontraditional skills to the classroom that a new teacher just out of college may not have. They've seen a side of students that other teachers haven't."
- **If you seek them, you'll find them.** Stewart says that Montgomery County and other American school districts *can* produce local minority and ESP candidates to fill teaching vacancies—2.2 million of which are expected over the next decade.

"Go out, find them, give them what they need to be successful, and mentor them," he concludes. "It'll work."

For More Information

Contact Allen Stewart, director of special projects at Alabama State University, at 334/229-6883. And go to www.rnt.org for information on Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., a nonprofit group working to create a more diverse teaching profession.

The Bottom Line

Comparing professions: U.S. teachers have literacy skills every bit as advanced as the members of professions—like medicine, law, and engineering—that pay far higher salaries, says a new ETS study. Details: www.ets.org/research/pic.

E-mail binge: One-third of Americans are now hooking into cyberspace via E-mail. E-mail traffic now runs 2.2 billion messages a day. By contrast, notes *U.S. News & World Report*, the Postal Service delivers 293 million pieces of first-class mail daily.

Inequality: The wealthiest 1 percent of American families now hold more wealth than the bottom 95 percent combined, notes a new United for a Fair Economy report. Current hourly wages for average workers lag 1972 wages by 6 percent. For more: www.stw.org.

Taxing the poor: Despite two decades of widespread tax cutting, 19 states are still imposing income taxes on families below the poverty line, which last year was $16,655 for a family of four. Only 23 states exempt families in poverty from income taxes.

On Your Side

Just Imagine the Headlines . . .

Disciplined for refusing to sleep in the same room with students, a teacher fights back and wins.

Mary Butkus

Using good sense got Illinois math teacher Jim Siemer in trouble. Help from the Southwestern Education Association-IEA got him out.

Like you, Illinois math teacher Jim Siemer winces when watching news images of some fallen, handcuffed educator with a coat over his head. You know—the teacher accused, too often falsely, of inappropriate contact with a student.

So, like you, Siemer is pretty careful about his conduct around students.

Ironically, it's precisely that caution, acquired through 16 years of teaching math at Southwestern High School in rural Piasa, that nearly put Siemer on the road to unemployment.

Believe it or not, Siemer was disciplined for refusing to sleep in the same motel room with students on a recent overnight field trip.

Fortunately, Siemer had the Illinois Education Association–NEA at his side. With union representation, he fought back, cleared his name, and won his case.

It all started in November 1997, when Siemer volunteered to chaperone a weekend field trip—without pay—to help out the high school agriculture teacher, who was expecting a baby.

When his party of eight students and six sponsors arrived at their destination—the Future Farmers of America convention in Kansas City—Siemer phoned the the high school principal to report on the motel room arrangements.

The breakdown: three boys in one room, four boys in another, and the girl in a room with girls from another school.

The principal then ordered Siemer to stay in the room with the three boys, saying that a school board policy mandated "constant supervision" on overnight field trips.

"It was a dilemma," recalls Siemer. "I told the principal I'd do the best I could, then I talked to the five other chaperones on the bus. They didn't think I should stay in that room.

"In this day and age, I don't think a teacher should do this," Siemer adds. "So I used my best judgment and decided to stay with another advisor."

Was that a mistake?

"The principal's order put Jim between a rock and a hard place," notes Matt Greider, president of the 130-member Southwestern Education Association.

"He either complied—and I can just imagine the lurid newspaper headlines afterward—or put his career, family, and income at stake by being insubordinate."

Siemer's decision to disobey earned him a disciplinary letter in his file, tantamount to a "pre-termination" notice (see side column).

The Association responded by filing a grievance and two unfair labor practice charges—one over the administration's failure to allow Siemer union representation at his "investigatory" hearing, and the second over the administration's failure to hand over student reports important to Siemer's defense.

Jim Siemer had other backing, too.

Some parents tried to speak on his behalf at a school board meeting—and were stifled—while others sent supportive letters to the local newspaper.

"I want to praise Mr. Siemer for using his moral conscience and good common sense," wrote one parent.

And many SEA members signed a petition on Siemer's behalf. "Teachers would not and could not believe he was disciplined after he *volunteered* for this field trip and received no compensation," says Greider.

Ruling last fall on Siemer's unfair labor practice charges, the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board ordered the same remedy sought in the grievance—the rescinding of "any and all disciplinary action taken" against Siemer.

Better yet: The board ordered Southwestern Community Unit School District No. 9 to post a notice in all of its schools, along with assurances the district would not violate employee rights under the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act again.

"I think I made the right decision by going with my gut feeling," Siemer concludes. "Sometimes you just have to do what's best for you—not what a principal asks you to do."

For More Information

Contact Southwestern (Illinois) Education Association President Matt Greider at 618/377-4407.

Policing Personnel Files

If you're new to NEA, you might wonder why the Association made so much fuss over a simple disciplinary letter in Jim Siemer's personnel file.

"Under the progressive discipline process in our Association contracts, that letter could have served as the basis for termination in the future," points out Siemer's UniServ director, Marcus Albrecht.

"We always advise members to check their files for information that isn't true or for material they aren't aware of," Albrecht adds. "In our region, we use an inventory sheet that enables members to go in with an Association building rep to initial what's in their personnel file."

In some Illinois contracts, members even have the right to receive a copy of any personal information entered in their file. Moreover, a state law allows school employees to remove an inaccurate letter or—if the district refuses—to attach a written response.

For advice on personnel files in your state, contact your UniServ office.

Class Act(ion) in Virginia

With guidance from the Richmond Education Association, more than 20 school social workers have won a class action grievance on inappropriate pay schedule assignments. The payoff: $40,000 in back pay as the 1998-99 school year began.

Another Step to Equality

With legal aid from the Pennsylvania State Education Association, four Annville-Cleona district teachers have won the right—previously denied—to purchase retirement credit for the time they were unemployed as the result of maternity.

Female educators forced to resign or take leave on account of pregnancy or childbirth are now eligible to purchase creditable in-school service time in the Pennsylvania Public School Employees' Retirement System.

The only proviso: A pension credit application must be made while the teacher or ESP is still in active service.

Labor organizing: In the largest successful union representational election since Ford workers unionized in 1941, 74,000 home-care health workers in the Los Angeles area have named the Service Employees International Union as their bargaining rep.

Dropouts: The number of Hispanic young adults with high school diplomas is up from 62 percent in 1996 to 67 percent in 1997. Over the past quarter-century, the Hispanic dropout rate has run 3.5 times the rate for non-Hispanic white students.

Hard time: One of every 150 Americans, reports the U.S. Department of Justice, in now behind bars. The inmate population has tripled since 1970. A baby born this year, reports the *New York Times*, has a 1 in 20 chance of spending time in jail or prison.

The world's kids: With just $8 billion, the world could guarantee every child on earth a basic level of literacy by the year 2015, says a new report from Oxfam, an international relief agency. For more: www.oxfam.org/educationnow/.

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Where did she learn her world revolves around children?

Tammy Gipson

As a McDonald's® crew member,
Tammy had a way with people.
Especially the Happy Meal® kind.
So we put her in charge of parties.
She loved it. The kids loved it.
Now, she teaches 3rd & 4th graders
22 subjects a day.
How does she keep all those balls
in the air at once?
Organization. Leadership.
And that can-do attitude
she got from McDonald's.
"I love what I do," Tammy says.
"I like to think I'm hosting a party...for learning."

Where can your students
learn values
that last
a lifetime?

1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000

did somebody say M?™

What's grabbed this second grader's attention? Spanish class. She's one of some 20,000 elementary students in California who have participated in NEA member Paul Nikol's program to introduce students to foreign languages at a younger age. ***See page 17.***

Jose Villegas

Innovators

He Said, She Said

Innovator:
Judy Logan

Job:
Middle school teacher, San Francisco Unified School District

Bright Idea:
To Logan, gender equity means more than simply treating girls and boys equally in the classroom. Educators need to recognize how they learn differently and that each gender faces different challenges.

That's part of the lesson in the gender workshops Logan teaches for the National SEED Project (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity).

In her own classroom, Logan assigns a writing exercise that asks her students to imagine they were born the opposite sex. Through that, she wants them to understand how being born male or female has already shaped what they have become.

Girls in one class talked about how they were sexually harassed in school, physically and verbally. The students formed committees to research existing laws, observe what was really happening in the hallways, and take action.

The girls realized they weren't alone with their experiences and feelings.

David Bacon

The boys realized they didn't have to take the bad rap for the few who were guilty—but could instead speak up for the rights of women.

"I honor their experiences," says Logan, "and empower them to do something about it."

Students need to have more choices in how they learn—whom to report on and how to do the report, for example.

Logan notes that including women in the curriculum doesn't mean teachers are necessarily emphasizing women. And women needn't have created a traditional milestone to have a place in history. Her students make group quilts to honor women—and they can choose famous women or a grandmother or even a favorite teacher.

"This is how you teach about gender," Logan says in Peggy Orenstein's book *School Girls*. "You do it one stitch at a time."

Logan adds that teachers don't have to be experts on a subject like women's issues to bring it into their classroom.

Give adolescent girls "permission to be whomever they want to be—to encourage them to stretch their ideas of who they can become," says Logan. And let boys know they can become allies for others who are marginalized, including girls and women.

Impact:
One of Logan's students, ninth grader Josh Haner, felt "cheated of time" at the end of that nine-week investigation of sexual harassment in schools. "The subject was not a closed issue," he said. Another boy joined his high school chapter of NOW (the National Organization for Women).

For More:
Logan chronicles her work in the book *Teaching Stories* (Kodansha International). Send E-mail to Logan at jlogan@jps.net.

Inspiring Teacher

Inspiring teachers teach more than facts and subject matter, notes Robert Sullo in The Inspiring Teacher: New Beginnings for the 21st Century, *coming in June from the NEA Professional Library.*

"What separates inspiring teachers from those who are less skilled is that inspiring teachers are initially less concerned about academic results and more concerned about how well the group is forming and how successfully a positive learning environment is being created.

Inspiring teachers are interested in how students work. Are students committed to quality, or do they simply complete the assignment? If some students are struggling, do others offer assistance, or is the classroom characterized by a 'survival of the fittest' mentality?

Inspiring teachers know that these and related environmental issues will play a significant role in how much genuine learning occurs during the year."

$14.95, stock #2955-0-00-F, 800/229-4200

Keeping Dreams

Innovator:
Gloria Ladson-Billings

Job:
Professor of education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and senior fellow at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Brown University

Bright Idea:
Immersed in literature discussing the problems of teaching African American children, Ladson-Billings decided to set upon a different course: What was right with African American children, and who was excelling at teaching them?

Her research led her to publish *Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* (Jossey-Bass), a book that offers lessons from eight exemplary teachers who "were able to see what abilities children had, not which ones they lacked."

"Good instructors approach every child as being capable of learning and excelling," notes Ladson-Billings. "They do not give any child permission to fail by avoiding reprimanding them or correcting their work, or by allowing shoddy work."

Successful teachers, she adds, also help students "understand and respect their own culture." This understanding and respect are "the building blocks of learning."

Good educators, says Ladson-Billings, possess a "sociopolitical consciousness" that helps students understand that educational achievement isn't just an individual matter.

The whole community benefits from an individual's achievement, she notes, and an individual's "failure to achieve diminishes the life of the community."

The least effective teachers are those whom Ladson-Billings calls "the assimilationists."

"They are the least empowered teachers," she says. "For them, society is just the way it is, and it is their job to fit people into society's boxes. These people are the ones who don't think they can change things."

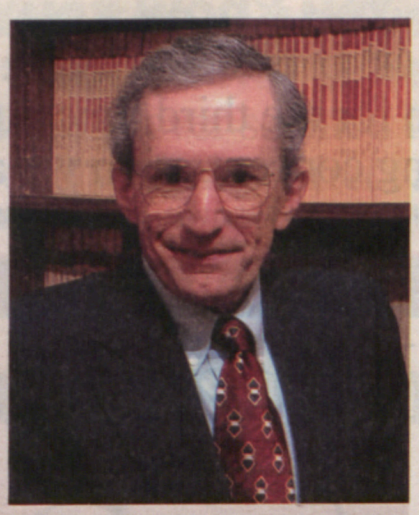
Judith Massuda

Impact:
Ladson-Billings hopes that parents and community members will use her book as a focal point for redesigning community schools that better meet the needs of students. With more than 12,000 copies sold, *Dreamkeepers* "has given many hope in the possibility of change," says Ladson-Billings.

For More:
Send E-mail to gjladson@facstaff.wisc.edu.

Quantifying **Quality**

Nothing has greater impact on a student's academic growth than the quality of the classroom teacher. That broad assumption now has a statistical basis as a result of the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) developed by Dr. William L. Sanders, statistics professor at the University of Tennessee.



What have you learned about a teacher's impact on students?

Teacher effectiveness is the single biggest factor influencing gains in achievement, an influence many times greater than poverty or per pupil expenditures. The effect of class size—within the range that exists now, not at the high or low extremes—is trivial.

Very effective teachers see all students make gains in both mixed-ability and homogeneous classes. Ineffective teachers tend to focus on the lower-end kids. They may be sincere and conscientious, but they're holding back the others. With exceptions, we've found higher achieving kids just don't gain as much in a year. Schools are doing a better job for kids achieving below the 50th percentile.

Compare a child who has three very effective teachers and makes gains of 110 percent a year over three years with a student who has ineffective teachers and only gains 70 percent each year. There will be a huge difference in their achievement levels at the end of that time.

If instruction for the whole class is geared at the lowest level, it's a self-fulfilling prophecy that the youngsters will be low-achieving regardless of their abilities.

We know that the effectiveness of a teacher has a residual impact on a student for at least four years.

What makes an effective teacher?

First, they meet children where the children are. Excessive reteaching in the fall is one of the big hindrances to growth. Teachers think the kids didn't get it last year, but maybe that's true for only three students, not all 25. Solving this problem requires unbelievable cooperation between grade levels, conversations between teachers, and good documentation.

We know that a teacher's effectiveness increases at a slow but positive pace from one to 10 years of experience. Then it seems to reach a plateau.

We also know you can't forecast the effectiveness of teachers by their school's mailing address. There is more variation in teacher effectiveness within a building than between buildings. We have identified these folks. What they're doing is repeatable. When they change assignments or even move to other buildings, they're still very effective.

We're now at the water's edge. TVAAS has never assumed there's a "best way" to teach. But we need to look at what can we learn from the extra-effective teachers so that this information can be shared. This is the next wave of research.

Why concentrate on the rate of academic progress?

If we want to see academic achievement moved to higher levels, the way to do this is to focus on the gain rate. Look at it as compound interest. We're not worrying about where children start. We're focusing on where they're going to be in 11th or 12th grade.

Every child should make a year's worth of gain for a year of school. It's not fair to expect any teacher to take a child who's two years below grade level and make that up in a year. What is doable is a gain of 110-115 percent. Do that over time, and it drives the child's achievement level up.

Contact Sanders at the Tennessee Center for Value-Added Research and Assessment, 225 Morgan Hall, Knoxville, TN 37901-1071, 423/974-7189. Send E-mail to wsander2@utk.edu. For more information, visit the Web at www.tvaas.com.

Hands-on **Science**

Innovator:
Robert DeHaan

Job:
Principal investigator and director, Elementary Science Education Partners, Atlanta, Georgia; professor of cell biology, Emory University

Bright Idea:
Thanks to DeHaan, elementary school teachers in Atlanta are learning more about science. And science undergraduates are learning more about teaching.

With a five-year, $5.7 million National Science Foundation grant, DeHaan has created a program that has turned 200 science majors from seven Atlanta universities into "elementary science education partners."

These college students team up with 1,700 teachers throughout Atlanta to invigorate science programs with a hands-on, inquiry-based approach.

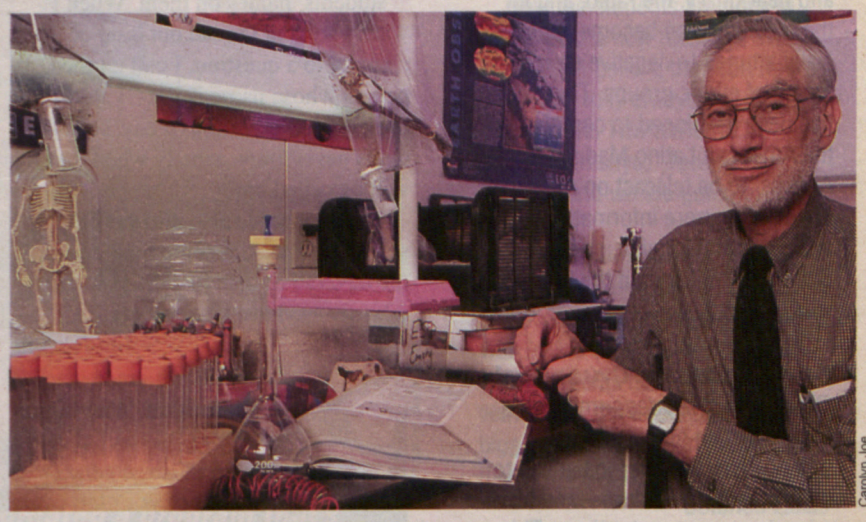
DeHaan established a science resource center, now run by the Atlanta Public Schools, that distributes kits filled with all the materials needed to teach a specific unit—food chemistry, solids, magnetism, weather.

Teachers receive professional development credit after they are trained in using each kit. A teacher/college student pair has six to eight weeks to complete one kit. The kit is then returned to the resource center, restocked, and sent to another school.

DeHaan also provides a summer training institute for teacher-leaders who want to "take ownership of science reform in their schools" and ensure they have a say in changes that are made in the way science is taught.

Impact:
One school principal reports improved student comprehension on teacher-made tests. More important, she says, "Science comes alive for these students. I even hear them at lunch talking about what they did in science class." As for the college students, at least 10 have changed their career plans to become full-time teachers.

For more:
Contact Elementary Science Education Partners, Emory University Health Science Center, Dept. of Cell Biology, 575 Rollins Way, Atlanta, GA 30322, 404/727-5050. On the Web at www.nas.edu/rise. E-mail: bob@cellbio.emory.edu.



Carolyn Joe

Working To **Make the Grade**

In March, the Houston Chronicle *reported on a new program formed in partnership with NEA to help students take school and their grades seriously:*

"Making Academics Count" is the theme of an intriguing national campaign launched by the National Alliance of Business. By July, the campaign aims to have 10,000 employers across the nation asking for and using school records in making hiring decisions.

The ultimate goal, of course, is to send the message to all students that "yes, school counts." . . .

This seems to be another constructive way the business community can contribute to the task that should involve all of us—making education better for the future work force of the nation.

For more information, visit the Web at www.makeacademicscount.org.

Good Stuff

Education for Action
Education for Action: Undergraduate and Graduate Programs That Focus on Social Change offers detailed information on programs in a wide variety of academic fields for students interested in social change. Included are faculty contacts and course titles. $8.95 plus $4 s&h from Food First. To order, write to the Subterranean Company, Box 160, 265 South Fifth St., Monroe, OR 97456 or Fax 541/847-6018.

Creative Connections
Young Children and the Arts: Making Creative Connections provides educators with a starting point for developing art-based early childhood programs. This publication from the Council of Chief State School Officers is available on the Web at http://aep-arts.org. To order print copies at $1.50 each, call 202/336-7016.

Smart Viewing
The National Council of La Raza has developed a curriculum guide designed to help students become more sensitive to what they see and hear on TV, the radio, and in the movies—and become especially attuned to negative stereotyping of ethnic groups. The guide has been developed to complement the American Latino Media Arts Awards, to be telecast on ABC on June 3. For more information or a free copy of the guide, call 800/311-6257 or visit the Web at www.nclr.org.

Correction on 'Crusades'
Classroom Crusades summarizes the attacks on public education today—from voucher initiatives to creationism curriculum—and how educators can counter them. This 80-page publication costs $5 plus $3.50 s&h (it's not free, as listed last month). Contact Rethinking Schools, 1001 East Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212, 800/669-4192. Send E-mail to rethink@execpc.com or visit the Web at www.rethinkingschools.org.

Museums Online
The National Directory of Teacher Programs and Resources in Art Museums lists museums nationwide, categorized by state and by topic, on the Web at www.nga.gov/resources/tpmain.htm.

You know you have a problem when . . .

"The P.A. comes on for the third time during a class period, breaking concentration yet again."

Carol Kilby, high school English teacher, Takoma Park, Maryland

Dilemma

Capturing Minds That Stray

How do you keep students' minds from wandering?

I use a Hacky Sack to keep my students focused. During discussions, I toss the sack to students, and only the student with the sack may speak.

Kids really get into this—they think it's a game, and they pay more attention because they don't want to "drop the sack." This method is also effective when asking questions.

Margaret Sager
Reading/language arts teacher
Sebring, Florida

I carry a set of index cards with the students' names on them. When I want a student to read out loud or respond to a question, I call on the person whose name is next. I shuffle the cards several times a day, so students never know exactly when they will be called on.

This technique also allows each student to speak at some time during the day, rather than just those students who always have the answers.

Ann Paoletti
Sixth grade teacher
Port Orchard, Washington

When I taught industrial education, I had four days of lab work and one day of lecture. My lecture classroom had a lot of glass, which made it difficult for students to concentrate on what I was saying.

My classroom policy was that if students felt sleepy, they could get up and walk around the room or lean against the wall until they felt better. After the first couple of times this policy was used, all the students knew what was happening, and it caused very little disruption of my lectures.

Carl Witte
Retired teacher
Harrison, Michigan

My friend and mentor introduced me to a self-management game.

Ted Pitts

In this daily game, students rate their own behavior and a partner's behavior four times a period on a PAL (peer-assisted learning) card. We then go to two ratings a day, then one. In the end, students can stay in control and in focus without any card.

Julieann Benyo
Seventh grade teacher
Ogden, Utah

I use the power of suggestion to conjure totally unexpected mental images. "My kitten must have jumped into my book bag this morning!" I'll exclaim—and hold the bag until everyone is looking. Even the most entrenched mind drifters can't resist the possibility that something unbelievable yet plausible has occurred.

Tim Altieri
High school Earth science and biology teacher
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

I provide each student with a dry erase board. As I teach, I model the concept. Students, in turn, do examples on their boards. They love it!

I'm also able to monitor progress without running myself ragged, because they can hold up their boards so I can see what they've done.

I bought a 4' x 8' sheet of white bathroom wall board for $10, and the store cut it into one-foot squares for free. The erasers are inexpensive (soft cloths work well, too). Students provide their own markers, because that's what really gets expensive.

Connie Hook
Seventh grade mathematics teacher
Statesboro, Georgia

When I taught third grade, I taped a 3" x 5" card to each child's desk. Each time a student answered a question correctly, I put a sticker on the card. After a few weeks, I changed the cards. Students with the most stickers chose a small prize. This kept our discussions lively and gave me a better idea of who was participating.

Judith Aten
Retired third grade teacher
Emmaus, Pennsylvania

I have students write their names on craft sticks and place the sticks in a plastic cup. When I ask a question, I shake the cup, pause, and then draw out a person's name. Once the question is answered, the craft stick goes back into the cup (so students aren't finished after just one question).

Students whose minds are wandering get to put five more sticks with their name on them into the cup.

This technique is a great auditory cue and an easy lesson in probability.

David Beatty
Third grade teacher
Lincoln, Nebraska

Got an Answer?

How do you teach today's lessons with yesteryear's textbooks?

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Published respondents will receive a bright *NEA Today* mug!

Strategies

You know you've been successful when . . .

"Even the child who never seemed to listen in class can respond with the correct answer."

Patricia Randall, seventh grade reading teacher, Fayetteville, North Carolina

Delight

Two Languages Come Early

A California teacher speaks out to ensure that students learn a foreign language at an earlier age.

For Paul Nikol's second graders at Olivet Elementary in Santa Rose, learning Spanish and Russian may mean fun and games.

But for Nikol, it's all part of a serious mission to introduce students to foreign languages while they're still in elementary school.

Nine years ago, Nikol teamed with Mary Jo Renzi of Maria Carrillo High and Patty Michiels of Piner High to develop a program that to date has navigated 20,000 elementary students through a Spanish language instruction program in five California school districts.

This year, a sixth district is piloting the award-winning "Foreign Languages in the Community" program, and 2,000 more students in K-4 are learning French or Spanish.

Still, Nikol says, "it's a drop in the bucket.

"U.S. students are painfully behind where they should be with foreign language competency," says Nikol.

"We are the only modern industrial nation that doesn't place importance on learning foreign languages and learning them in the primary grades," Nikol observes. "In other countries, students learn English and at least one other language besides their own. Here we're isolationists, in a sense, and we're not preparing our kids for the millennium."

Nikol's language program had administrative approval—but no language teachers. So Nikol turned to high school students to teach Spanish once a week for 30 minutes between January and May.

"The high school students get to practice and become more proficient in languages they're still learning," says Nikol. "And they get to learn teaching skills. The younger kids love the older kids. It's a win-win situation."

Adds Nikol: "Maybe we'll get a few teachers out of this."

The California Foreign Language Project at Sonoma State University helps Nikol and his colleagues train the high school students for their teaching role. This year, nearly 180 teenagers have learned how to develop lesson plans, teach language immersion, and serve as role models. Their language teachers evaluate and grade them accordingly.

For the elementary students, there are no grades, just incentives—stickers, rewards, and fun.

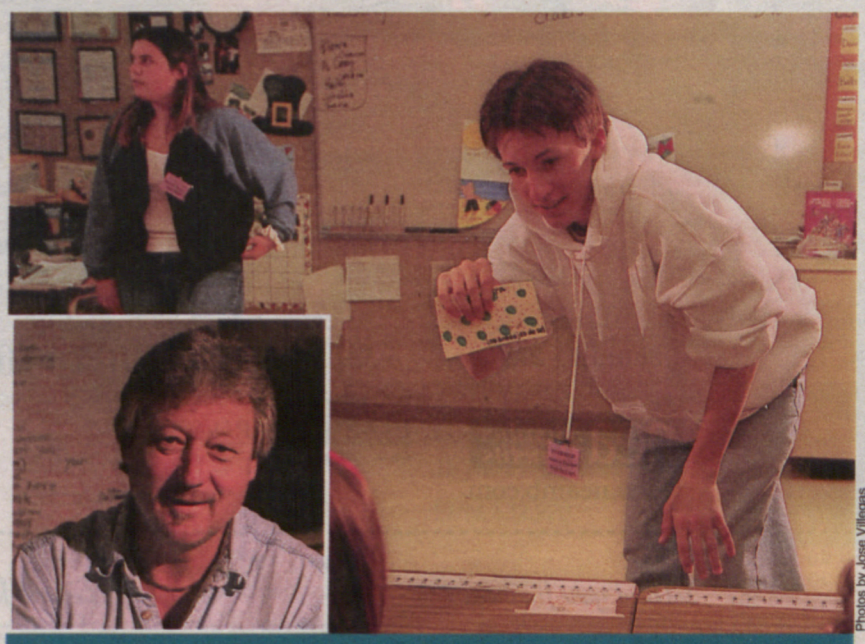
The curriculum focuses on commonly used words such as numbers, colors, days of the week, the months, family structure, and facial features. Later, the language is incorporated in social studies, and the emphasis is on the culture. Field trips are added to help older students learn a piece of California history and the Spanish influence on their state.

"Fun, though, is the key to helping these kids enjoy learning language," says Nikol. On "Hat Day," students name dozens of hats in Spanish and act out the role of the person likely to wear that hat. On "Sports Day," students play assorted ball games after receiving instructions in Spanish.

For the fashion show, two high school students model clothing, teaching the Spanish words for each garment. Then they toss the clothing in a pile, and students race to collect the items teachers identify in Spanish.

"Our kids know that learning a language can be fun, and that it's important to know a second language," says Nikol. "It opens up new horizons, and it builds self-esteem."

Nikol, who was born in China and grew up in Australia, is now teaching his class rudimentary Russian.



Photos by Jose Villegas

Teacher Paul Nikol (inset) has created a program that's introduced 20,000 elementary students to foreign languages. High school students play a key role in helping the younger students learn Spanish and French.

For More Information

Contact Paul Nikol at 707/522-3045, E-mail pnikol@pousd.k12.ca.us.

Idea Exchange

Click en Español

To find Spanish-speaking E-mail pals, my high school Spanish students make their own Web pages. These contain their pictures (with parental approval only), first names, and brief biographical sketches.

I've posted interactive, self-checking exercises for my students at the Web site, so they can practice their Spanish vocabulary spelling.

Using HyperStudio, I created maps of the countries of the world. Each of my second-year Spanish students will know the location, capitals, and predominant language of every country in the world by the end of the school year.

You're welcome to visit our Web site at http://comet.charles-city.k12.ia.us/Bode/QuickIndex.html/.

Al Bode
Charles City, Iowa

Attention Codes

I have found a way to capture my students' attention at the beginning of class while I'm taking attendance.

Every day, I put the agenda on the board. I used to start by writing, "Hi," but that got old. So I tried a coded message.

Now the students are hooked and expect a new message every day. I can't believe they can figure it out, but they always do. Here's an example: TIMAWAGTSC8. Decoded, it says, "Today is Monday and we are going to start chapter 8."

If you try this, write down the sentence. I have, on rare occasions, forgotten what the message was by the time the bell rang.

My students have no problem with two or three sentences. The bigger challenge is coming up with them!

Soterios Lallas
Westby, Wisconsin

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You can pass along your tips to *NEA Today*'s more than 2.4 million readers in one of five ways:

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Years There	Annual Salary $
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§Alimony, child support, or separate maintenance income need not be revealed if you do not wish it considered as a basis for repayment.

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Inside Scoop

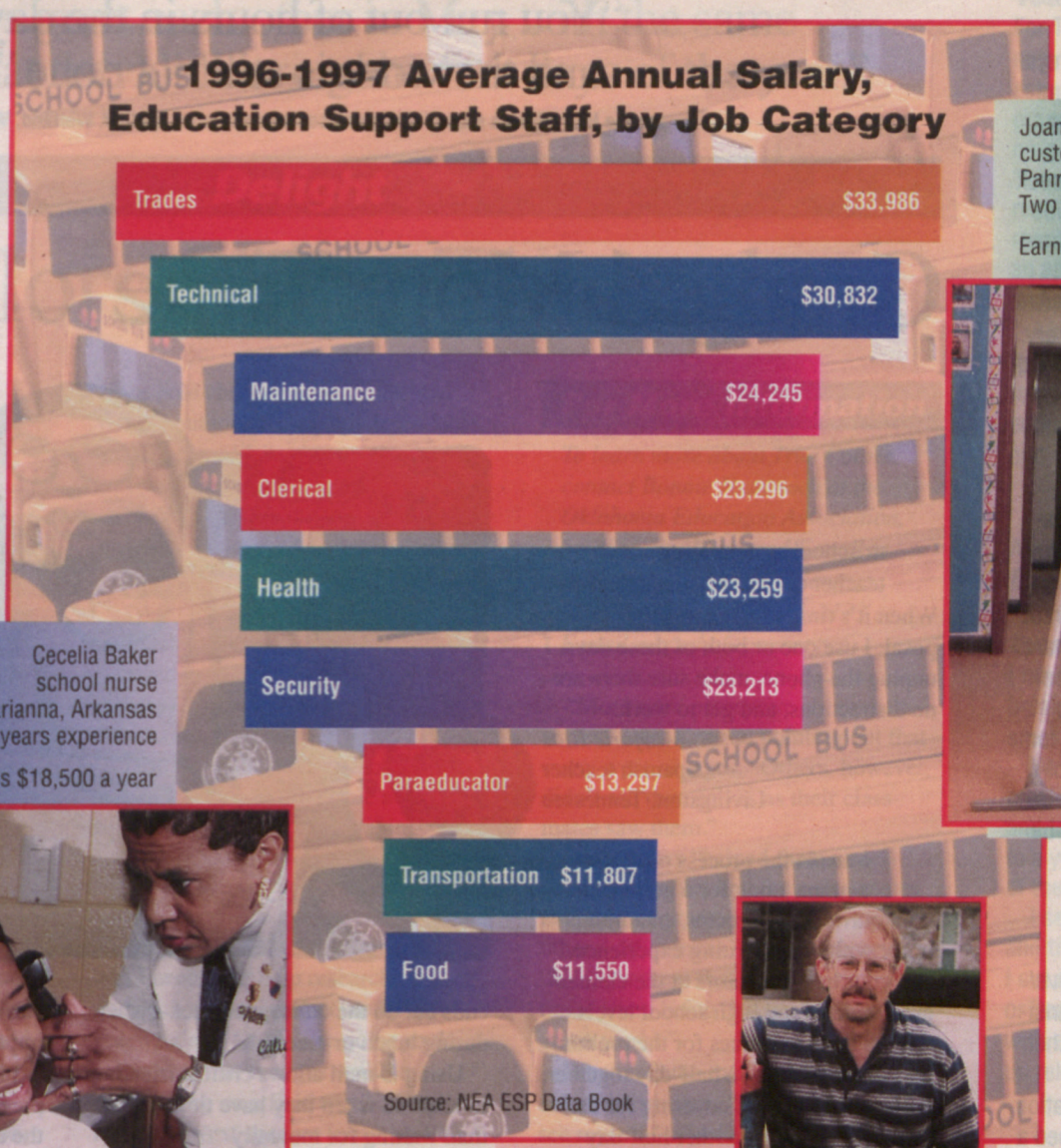
Support Staff Bring Expertise to Education

Education support personnel make up about 40 percent of the K-12 education workforce, working directly with students and providing services that allow schools to function.

The health and education of our children depend on the qualifications and expertise of bus drivers, nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, and paraeducators.

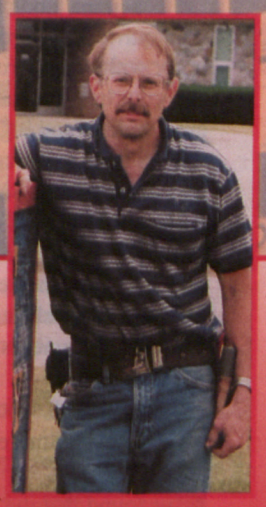
Without the work of these and other support personnel, schools could never succeed.

ESP staff are clearly worth a fortune—but are they paid accordingly? Not currently. NEA recently completed a landmark national survey that documents the huge gap between the value of education support work and the inadequate compensation of education support workers.



Joann Gee
custodian
Pahrump, Nevada
Two years experience
Earns $24,112

Cecelia Baker
school nurse
Marianna, Arkansas
15 years experience
Earns $18,500 a year



Sandy Wilson
maintenance worker
Kenowa Hills, Michigan
15 years experience
Earns $32,920

How much do education support personnel earn?

NEA's study notes that the average annual earnings of all ESP who work 30 hours a week or more is $20,838.

But this one figure hides tremendous variations in how ESP are paid, from job to job, from school district to school district, and from state to state.

NEA has divided support personnel jobs into nine broad job groups (see chart). The average annual pay of the highest paid job group, trade workers, is $33,986—nearly three times that of food service workers, at $11,550.

Why such a huge difference between job groups?

One reason is the big variation in work schedules among support personnel. Some work year-round, others work only during the school year. Many are part-timers, with lower annual earnings and often fewer benefits.

NEA's recent survey of K-12 ESP members found that 100 percent of technical services support staff work at least seven hours a day, while 39 percent of food service staff work less than six hours a day.

Even within an ESP job group, there's a broad range of pay scales. In the NEA survey, 18 percent of paraeducators who are paid hourly make less than $7.50 an hour, for example, while 17 percent earn more than $11.50 an hour.

Why should teachers—and the public—care about support personnel salaries?

"The school community is an interdependent system," says Roxanne Dove of NEA's Education Support Personnel program. "What happens to any part of that community affects the entire educational process.

"When we undervalue ESP," adds Dove, "we undervalue education."

Ensuring that support personnel are paid fairly takes backing from the public and from all members of the education community. For that to happen, everyone needs to know the real nature of ESP jobs—and how they affect learning.

What do we need to know?

Here are a few facts from NEA's K-12 ESP membership survey:

■ Many support personnel jobs require specialized training, licenses, and certificates. Fifty-five percent of K-12 ESP members need to meet at least one specific training or certification requirement to qualify for their position—and this doesn't include the Federal Commercial Driver's License required of bus drivers.

About half of paraeducators and 80 percent of support personnel in the technical jobs group have to meet such a requirement.

■ ESP are well educated. More than half have completed at least some college, and 94 percent have completed high school.

■ ESP work effectively with students because they're involved in their communities. Three-quarters of NEA K-12 ESP members volunteer in at least one community program. An amazing 20 percent of support staff are active volunteers with four or more programs.

■ Support personnel are experienced and loyal. The average ESP has nearly 11 years of experience. Most ESP have spent their entire support personnel career with their current employer.

For More Information

■ To learn more about the wide range of services that education support personnel provide—and for information on professional development resources for support personnel—visit the NEA Web site at www.nea.org/esp.

■ For stories on the great work that support personnel do on the job and in the community, visit the *NEA Today* Web site and click on "ESP Extra."

Good Stuff

Grants and Free Stuff
In *How To Get Grants and Free Stuff*, enterprising teachers demystify the grant-writing process and share their strategies for getting thousands of dollars in grants. Information includes where to seek sources for grants, how to decide which grants to apply for, and how to maximize your chances for success. $9.95 for NEA members from the NEA Professional Library, stock #2914-3-00-FG. To order, call 800/229-4200.

Grant-writing Classes
Through the Electronic Schoolhouse on America Online, educators can access GrantWriters, an area with a message board, a series of online seminars on grant writing, and logs of past seminars. Professional grant writers coordinate these areas, and they also critique many grant proposals for teachers. The Electronic Schoolhouse, coordinated by NEA member Dave Thomas in Utah, can be reached on America Online by entering keyword: ESH.

Looking Inward
The Role of Self in Teacher Development explores the major transition points in becoming a teacher, noting that teachers who best facilitate the growth and education of their students have developed a fine balance between their own personal and professional development. Essays cover pre-service teachers, new teachers, and master teachers. $21.95 plus $3.50 s&h from State University of New York Press, 800/666-2211, Fax 800/688-2877. On the Web at www.sunypress.edu.

Making Sense of Science
Boats, Balloons, and Classroom Video: Science Teaching as Inquiry examines how science teachers make sense of scientific phenomena, how that differs from the way children shape their knowledge of science, and how that affects classroom teaching. This book also tackles what teachers can learn by exploring their students' scientific ideas and how resources such as texts, tools, and activities support the way students make sense out of science. $21 plus $4 s&h from Heinemann, 800/793-2154, Fax 800/847-0938. On the Web at www.heinemann.com.

You know you have a problem when . . .

"You run out of hours in the day, and the work is still not done."

Jacque Harrod, high school family and consumer science teacher, Worland, Wyoming

Dilemma

Granted More Time

How do you find time to write a grant proposal?

Ted Pitts

Our school system allows each teacher two professional days. When it's time to write a grant proposal, I use one or both of these days. I unplug the phone, make sure there are no distractions, and get to work.

Marjorie Rios
Spanish teacher
Livingston, Tennessee

We are in the process of writing a grant. Look for a good team—your curriculum director, an administrator with grant-writing experience, and your best educators at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Pool their resources for the preliminary—we're doing a half-day together, with our colleagues covering for us. We'll regroup for another half-day once we've refined everything. In between, we make assignments to committee members.

Mary Heil-Allen
High school Spanish teacher
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

I've found that the most successful proposals are written cooperatively with colleagues who have similar interests but proficiency in different skills.

I begin by brainstorming ideas with a colleague. I attempt to clarify all the requirements. I set up a timeline and parcel out portions of the proposal to the one or two people who wish to be involved in the grant implementation.

Then I consult with someone who has written a grant before and flesh out the various pieces, checking for details and compliance with the grant guidelines. Having an administrator serve as a "critical friend" provides for positive input and support.

I plan to have the grant written a few days before the deadline, so last-minute changes can happen without total stress meltdown. I work on weekends but do the colleague check-ins during lunch or recess.

Using E-mail allows critical friends to respond when they have time, rather than waiting for mutually "free" time.

Susan Mittler
President, Ithaca Teachers Association
Ithaca, New York

When I want to write a grant to obtain accelerated reader materials for our school, I contact teachers in our district who have written similar grants. Then I share available catalogs and materials with members of my department and the librarian. Faculty members make a short list of what materials would be useful for their curriculum objectives.

With these lists and a skeleton grant proposal from another teacher, my proposal is much easier and quicker to prepare.

Beth Lower
Sixth grade language arts and seminar teacher
Mexico, Missouri

Whenever I get ideas for equipment or materials that would enhance my classes, I write them down in my computer, along with a brief lesson plan noting which state curriculum standards would be met or improved.

I have a printout of our district's purchasing codes and list them with the items needing funding. I update prices when I get catalogs. Then, when we receive information about grants, I scan the forms and "cut and paste" from my documents to the forms.

That way, the bulk of my application is already prepared, and I only have to tweak the proposal statement to make it a better fit for the particular grant funder's requirements.

Leanne Hart
High school art instructor
Pensacola, Florida

For more answers, visit the Web at www.nea.org/neatoday. For resources, check Books on page 45.

Got an Answer?

What's the best way to reach out and collaborate with your colleagues?
Send your answer by regular mail, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail at dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org. Please include your job title and grade level.

Published respondents will receive a bright new *NEA Today* mug!

Growth

You know you've been successful when . . .

"Educators greet each other in May with the same enthusiasm that they did during the first days of the year."

Elaine Fess, elementary special ed teacher, Tampa, Florida

Delight

True Colors Shine Through

A veteran teacher gains new insights into her students and overcomes a tough year.

Last year was rough going for veteran teacher Mary Kruska. Her fourth grade class was perhaps the most difficult she'd ever taught in her 21 years at Washington Elementary in Altus, Oklahoma.

"The kids were misbehaving and extremely disrespectful," she recalls. Kruska turned to the Oklahoma Education Association for help.

Bonnie Hammock, an instructional advocacy specialist for OEA, prescribed True Colors, a workshop that could help Kruska understand her students' unique personality traits and how they affected others.

True Colors provides educators, parents, and students with a common language for interpreting and discussing behavior. That common language takes the form of identifying personality types in terms of colors: blue, green, orange, and gold—although no one is just one color, Hammock notes.

- Greens tend to be the thinkers—cool and removed, analytical and logical. They thrive on concepts and knowledge and are irritated with drills and routines.
- Oranges are optimistic, impulsive, spontaneous, and competitive. They're freedom lovers and risk takers. They seek out fun and variety, and they dislike authority and rules.

These are the kids who have difficulty fitting into academic routines, says Kruska. Alternative schools have a high percentage of students who are orange and green, Hammock adds.

- Children who are enthusiastic and warm, flexible and nurturing fall into the blue category.
- Hovering not far from the blues are the golds, who are the most comfortable with academic routines. Being "good as gold" clearly defines them, since gold children follow rules and respect authority. They are dependable, sensible, and like order and structure.

Teachers tend to be gold.

"Schools, as institutions, are very gold and very difficult for oranges and greens," Hammock notes.

"With this tool, I can help encourage students to behave in a way that is suitable to the situation and that society expects and demands," says Kruska.

True Colors provides teachers with a more effective, comfortable avenue for giving instructions, encouraging enthusiasm, and inspiring good behavior, says Hammock.

For example, a teacher can say to her class, "My weakest color is green, and I need your help researching such and such on the Internet, so let's be green today." Or "We're going to do something that oranges will like — we're going on a field trip," or "we're having a guest speaker today, so let's be very gold."

Hammock also dispensed her knowledge of personality styles to Kruska's students. Within minutes, students had guessed their "color."

"Most were perceptive about themselves," says Kruska, pointing out that many were oranges. "Others, however, didn't see themselves as their classmates saw them."

True Colors "helped them understand themselves and their classmates and led to a greater respect for each others' differences," Kruska observes. "It taught them that there are definite times when being orange, blue, or green works."

When it came to assessing Kruska's color, the students "didn't see me as I see myself," says Kruska, who believes she's orange and then blue. "I had to be very structured and controlling last year, and not as much fun as I wanted to be."

This year, she's changing colors.

For More Information

To learn more about True Colors, contact Bonnie Hammock at the Oklahoma Education Association, 580/355-9643, or send E-mail to bhammock@okea.org. Contact Mary Kruska at 580/481-2133 or E-mail mkruska@onenet.net.

Lisa Hoke

Veteran teacher Mary Kruska found a new way to connect effectively with all her students when the Oklahoma Education Association introduced her to a program called True Colors.

Idea Exchange

Teacher Appreciation

For Teacher Appreciation Week, I copy apples on red paper. I then ask students to write "apple-grams" for their teachers, beginning with "I like you because . . . ," "I appreciate you because . . . ." I read over the notes, stuff them in manila envelopes decorated with an apple and the teacher's name, and place them in teachers' boxes.

I keep all the apple-grams I have received in an album. Whenever I feel I am not appreciated as an educator, I just open that album and smile for a long time.

Nilsa Sotomayor
Bogotá, Colombia

Note: Teacher Appreciation Week is May 2-8.

Small Steps, Big Grants

I make time for writing grants by breaking the process down into small, manageable steps.

Writing grant proposals requires creative thinking, so I brainstorm and jot down ideas for six months to a year. Then I list various parts of the project, if it's a large one.

I set aside a weekend every now and then to add to my rough draft. I cut and paste pictures of supplies or items I'd like to include, along with catalog information. I also pull up relevant ideas on the Internet.

Debbie Gaj
Livonia, Michigan

Works4Me
NEA's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

Have a great idea? Pass along your tips to *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail: ideas@neatoday.nea.org.

For more tips, check out NEA's weekly E-mail service, Works4Me. To sign up, send an E-mail to lyris@list.nea.org.

- In the "subject" line, type: sign me up, NEA!
- In the message block, type: subscribe Works4Me
- Send the message.

To submit your own tip, E-mail it to: owner-Works4Me @list.nea.org.

Bits & Bytes

Bytes for Beginners

I just bought my first computer and I'm ready to go online! I've heard that I can get free E-mail accounts on the Internet. Is this true? How do I do it?

You heard right. Free E-mail accounts abound on the Net. But let's raise the red flag on a few points before you run out and sign up.

First, see what your Internet Service Provider (ISP) offers. Almost every ISP gives you an E-mail account as part of your service. So, if you're paying $20 a month for Net access, it makes sense to use the E-mail account that's provided.

There may be times when you'll want a second E-mail address, say just for communicating with your students and their parents. This is where free E-mail accounts can be handy. There are three main types of free E-mail service.

■ **Point of Presence** (POP) mail stores your incoming mail on the provider's computer until you download it to your computer—letting you compose and read E-mail offline. The downside: You need to be technically savvy to set up a POP account.

■ **Web-based E-mail** is tops in ease and convenience. You simply go to the provider's Web site—from any computer with a browser—and log in to get your messages.

Be aware, however: Many Web-based and POP services cover their operating costs through advertising or by selling information about their subscribers—you.

■ A **Mail Forwarding Service** (MFS) gives you a free E-mail address and then routes your mail to your ISP E-mail account.

What's good: If you ever change ISPs, you don't need to notify your online contacts. Just update your MFS profile. What's bad: The extra layer of technology makes it more likely that something will go wrong.

For a list of free E-mail account services, visit www.emailaddresses.com/guide_types.htm.

Have ideas, comments, or questions about technology? You can E-mail webeditor@dear.nea.org or write to Dear Webeditor, NEA Center for Education Technology, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Check out www.nea.org/cet for more questions from beginners and answers from the experts.

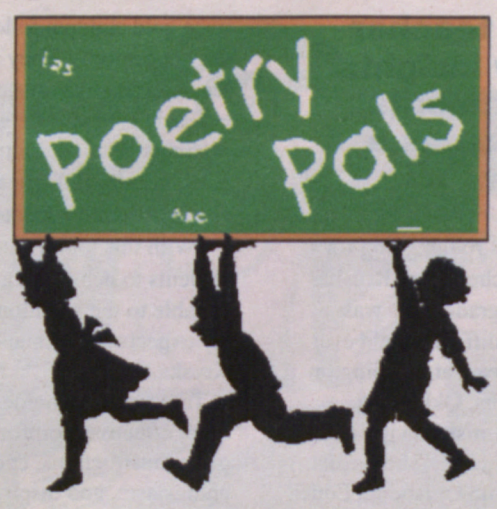
My favorite Web site . . .

"Access Excellence (www.gene.com/ae/) contains hundreds of classroom-ready activities for biology and life sciences, as well as opportunities for online collaboration."

Judy Allard, high school biology teacher, Burlington, Vermont

Wired Classroom

Creating Poetry on the Web



The K-12 Student Poetry Publishing Project

My talented second graders host a Web site called Poetry Pals: K-12 Student Poetry Publishing Project. Students and classes are invited to submit original poems to us by using E-mail or a form on the Web site, at www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/5165. We now have participants from 19 countries and 47 states.

We use Adobe PageMill to format poems for the Web and then post them on the site.

Poetry Pals includes poetry forms, lesson plans, and links to child-safe poetry pages.

Cheryl Markham
Second grade teacher
San Jose, California

New Look at Book Reports

Got the book report blahs? Have your students share their book reviews with readers from around the world by posting their opinions with electronic booksellers, such as Amazon.com.

Whether they adore or despise a book, my students must provide specific reasons and examples to support their critique. To protect their privacy, students sign their reviews with just their first name and last initial.

Students who are reluctant to write traditional book reports are eager to share their ideas in a "real-world" setting. Their review might appear next to one written by a reader from another continent. (Yes, this is a perfect way to get maps into their hands!)

Often the bookseller's site suggests other novels on a similar theme or other books by the author. These suggestions have my students racing back to the library for their next book.

Amy Hamra
Gifted/talented program facilitator
Pekin, Illinois

Connecting With Families

Nearly all of my students have E-mail access at home. Each week, I send an E-mail that spotlights upcoming tests, school news, and at least two hyperlinks to Web sites that tie into something we're studying.

Parents are thankful for this additional form of communication—as well as for the suggestions for safe places on the Web. I encourage students to E-mail me back with questions or interesting Web sites that I can pass on to the rest of the class.

Janice Wright
Fourth grade teacher
Tarpon Springs, Florida

The Ultimate Spring Break

About a week and a half before spring break, my colleague Christine King and I give our 11th and 12th grade career prep English students a fun assignment: Plan the ultimate spring break.

Students use the Internet to plan their trip. They must choose a realistic destination—someplace they could get to and from in a week. They search online for airfare, hotel accommodations, activities, and ground transportation. They research any special health or travel requirements.

They then plan a budget using an Excel spreadsheet. There's no spending limit for this imaginary vacation!

They "pack" a suitcase—a die-cut visual aid—by pasting pictures of all the items they'll need, and then present their suitcase to the class.

After spring break, students write "travel articles," simulating real articles they have researched from newspapers and magazines.

This project incorporates budgeting, communication skills, technology, logical thinking, and problem solving in a real-life setting. And it's great for keeping students engaged during a difficult pre-holiday week.

Susanne Fitzpatrick
English and special education teacher
Irvine, California

Dispatches from the Sea

My class has had a lot of learning fun using the single computer in our classroom. For instance, we're in contact with the *Ronald H. Brown*, a ship that's traveling the globe performing science experiments.

Captain Parsens E-mails us his position daily at noon, and we plot it on the world map. From aboard the ship, he and his scientists have answered many of my students' geography and science questions.

Douglas May
Fifth grade teacher
Williamsburg, Virginia

My favorite technology . . .

"TI-92 graphing calculators enhance my students' learning. They love to experiment with problems and spend hours trying to 'stump' the calculator."

Tom Elsass, algebra teacher, St. Marys, Ohio

Friendly User

Technology Takes Teamwork

Great stuff happens when librarians and teachers team up.

Who:
Elaine Snider, librarian, Waggoner Elementary School, Tempe, Arizona

E-mail:
esnider@speedchoice.com

Inspiration:
Snider claims she entered the computer age kicking and screaming, but now her library is the school's technology hub—and she regularly teams up with teachers to help make technology an important part of every student's learning experience.

Snider started collaborating with teachers even before technology entered the picture, when she decided that "the library as an isolated class was not very meaningful to kids."

What made sense, she says, was to have students learn library skills while they were involved in a subject. So Snider freed herself from scheduled classes to work with teachers at their request.

Initially, some teachers rebelled at the loss of scheduled library time, but Snider says demand for her services grew by word of mouth. By the time technology was added to the mix, the idea of working as a team with the librarian was familiar to Waggoner's teaching staff.

Lesson:
Once the guardian of print materials, Snider has seen her role change into the keeper of technology. It's a natural evolution, she says.

"The library's role is very different. We can't be traditional anymore—not if we want to help these kids," Snider explains.

"They're using the Internet more and more for research—but they need to learn how to evaluate what they're finding," she continues. "Even as a traditional library, that was a big part of our job. It's an even bigger part now."

Don Stevenson

Arizona librarian Elaine Snider develops thematic units that integrate technology into the curriculum.

And Snider presides over a bigger space. A room adjacent to the library now houses a production lab, with 29 computers and a host of multimedia equipment.

Once a week, teachers work in the lab with Snider or master technology teacher Jay Wallace, or on their own. The focus of this scheduled time is on meeting the goals of the Kyrene school district's technology curriculum.

Working with teachers, "we come up with an activity to hit the targets," Snider says.

Here's how:

- Snider developed a unit, tied to the fourth and fifth grade social studies curriculum, based on the American Girls series. In addition to reading several of the books and participating in classroom activities, students produce plays using American Girls Premiere software and develop Web pages to show what they're learning.

"Boys get into this every bit as much as the girls!" Snider remarks.

- In the production lab, fifth grade "experts" create daily PowerPoint presentations—covering the lunch menu and announcements—that are broadcast on the school's TV system.
- Students develop electronic portfolios using HyperStudio. They might include their photos, a voice recording that tells "all about me," or a sample of what they like to read. When parents come in for a conference, students lead them through the portfolio.

Click:
"Two heads are better than one," Snider says. "Teachers are the ones who know the kids. But the librarian may be able to take a curriculum item, develop it, and maybe make it more meaningful by using technology."

For More Information

- *Go to the Kyrene school district Web site at www.kyrene.k12.az.us to access the Waggoner home page. Once there, go to "Classes" to find Snider in the "Resource Center."*
- *Another place to visit on the Waggoner home page is "Catlinks," which offers links to fun and educational resources for children and lesson plans for teachers.*

New & Noteworthy

Teacher-tested Resources
The Horace Mann Company has joined 1997 National Teachers Hall of Fame inductee Alan Haskvitz in creating a Web site of 5,000 educational resources. The site provides mailing addresses, phone numbers, E-mail addresses, and links to resources for parents, teachers, and students. See the site at www.reacheverychild.com.

Cool Use for Excel
Visit "The EXC-Files" at www.illuminet.net/pattie/projects/ls/ls.html to see how fourth graders at Cucamonga Middle School in California incorporate Microsoft Excel into a class project.

Internet Lesson Plans
You'll find Internet lesson plans for grades K-12 in the second edition of *Educating With the Internet.* The book contains an updated directory of over 1,300 education-related sites by category. $35.95 (includes a CD-ROM). Order online at www.charlesriver.com.

Standards Online
Developing Educational Standards, a Web site from Putnam Valley Central Schools in New York, contains links to state educational standards sites from around the country. Go to Putwest.boces.org/Standards.html.

NEH Humanities Guides
The National Endowment for the Humanities' EDSITEment Web site offers five Learning Guides on diverse humanities topics. Go to http://edsitement.neh.gov/guides/g_intro2.htm to download the guides, suggestions for using the Web, and lesson plans.

Talk to Us

Have a nifty classroom tip or lesson plan that uses technology? E-mail a description (under 200 words, please!) to **wiredclassroom@list.nea.org**.

Is there a Web site, CD-ROM, or piece of software you can't live without? E-mail your favorites—and why you love them—to **myfavoritetech@list.nea.org**.

Or send your responses by regular mail to *NEA Today*, or by Fax to 202/822-7206, or through the Web at www.nea.org/cet.

Those published here will receive a sparkling *NEA Today* mug!

Health

From the Network

The NEA Health Information Network suggests the following helpful resources.

Healthy New Year
It's time to replace your old pocket calendar! The NEA Health Information Network has just published its 1999-2000 pocket health calendar. To order free single or bulk quantities of the breast and cervical health academic year calendar, contact NEA HIN at 800/718-8387 or send E-mail to NEAHIN1@aol.com.

Violence Prevention
In a Flash aims to teach middle school students the damage guns cause and to deter them from using guns to solve problems. A companion teacher's guide to this video and an activity book for grades 3-4 are also available. For free copies in English or Spanish, contact the National Emergency Medicine Association at 410/494-0300 or Fax 410/494-0725.

Drugs: A No-Brainer
Every middle school principal has been mailed a copy of teacher- and student-oriented materials that show how abusing drugs affects the brain. It's part of a new science education initiative from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Contact your principal to review the material. Additional drug abuse information can be found on the Web at www.nida.nih.gov.

The Truth About Hate
The Truth About Hate, a one-hour video, features teenagers who are vocal and secure in their own prejudices as well as people who have been impacted by bigotry and discrimination, bringing the teens face to face with the consequences of racism, religious hatred, and sexual discrimination. To order the video and study guide, call AIMS Multimedia at 800/367-2467.

Environmental Health
The Children's Environmental Health Network has released a new online resource guide with information on how to protect children from environmental health hazards. On the Web at www.cehn.org.

Tick . . . Tick . . . Tick

Summer's almost here—time for ticks to emerge. David Weld, executive director of the American Lyme Disease Foundation and a former science and biology teacher, spoke recently with Julia Mitchell of the NEA Health Information Network on Lyme disease and other tick-borne ailments that may soon be on the rise.

What is Lyme disease?
Lyme disease is caused by bacterium called *Borrelia burgdorferi*.

The typical and most striking symptom of Lyme disease is a bull's-eye rash that expands to three to eight inches and lasts two to three weeks. Other symptoms include minor fever and body aches and pains. Occasionally, there will be multiple rashes on the body.

Unfortunately, lots of these symptoms might disappear for months or even a year. Then they come back in what's called late-stage Lyme disease. That's when you can develop severe arthritic, cardiac, and neurological symptoms.

How do you contract Lyme disease?
People are infected when they're bitten by an infected tick—a deer tick in the northeast and upper midwest parts of the country, or a western black-legged tick on the West Coast.

But not all ticks are infected. And only 1 percent of people bitten by a tick end up contracting Lyme disease. If you take the tick off within the first 36 to 48 hours, it hasn't been attached long enough to transmit the bacteria.

What's the best way to remove a tick?
Using a pair of sharp-pointed tweezers, grab the tick as close as you can to the skin and pull it out firmly and gently. Don't use a match, petroleum jelly, or nail polish remover, because that may agitate the tick and cause it to inject the bacteria.

Use an antibiotic ointment at the bite site, and look for that bull's-eye rash. If it appears within seven to 30 days, seek medical treatment.

Tell us about the new vaccine for Lyme disease.
The vaccine was approved last December for people between the ages of 15 and 70. It's currently not available for children under the age of 15. The vaccine involves three shots. After two shots, a person is about 50 percent protected. After three shots, about 80 percent protected.

That means eight out of 10 people are going to be protected—but only from Lyme disease. There are other tick-borne diseases out there, so we will continue to recommend tick checks and methods for reducing the tick population.

Are there problems with misdiagnosis?
Lyme disease, in all honesty, is still overdiagnosed, underdiagnosed, overtreated, and undertreated—all for a number of reasons.

Lyme disease symptoms can mimic symptoms of other problems. There are students with the disease who have had to stay in their rooms 24 hours a day, becoming very withdrawn and depressed. Having been a teacher for 16 years, I know one could question whether this means a drug problem, growing pains, or something else.

In many instances, people would rather have Lyme disease than multiple sclerosis or chronic fatigue syndrome—and they'll go to their doctor and insist that's the problem.

Also, it's a disease that's received a lot of publicity. Every year we get reported cases from, say, New Mexico or Arizona, when the ticks that carry this disease don't exist there.

What's the best way to avoid getting tick-borne diseases?
Educators should check with the nurse to see if there are any ticks in the area and whether students have been bitten. If so:

- Make play areas for students as much of a safe zone as possible. The deer tick does not like and cannot survive in direct sunlight. Most will be found in grass that isn't mowed enough or in low brush in shaded areas.

Physical education teachers and coaches should know that you're not going to find these ticks in the middle of a playing field. But if students run into hedgerows at the edge of the woods, there's a good chance that ticks could be hiding there.

- Kids are safe in the sandbox—ticks don't like sand. But if there's a tree over the sandbox and grass 10 feet away, ticks could be in the area.
- If you know you've been in a tick-infested area, examine yourself every day for ticks. Students who've been in the woods should be examined daily.

Resources

- The American Lyme Disease Foundation—dedicated to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control of Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections—provides materials to schools and will soon have a Fax-on-demand service. For more information, visit the Web at www.aldf.com or call 914/277-6970.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Infectious Diseases has fact sheets and other useful information on Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, on the Web at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases.
- For information about the Lyme disease vaccine, visit the Web at www.lymerix.com or call 888/596-3749, ext. 700.
- The Lyme Disease Foundation is a health care agency dedicated to finding solutions to tick-borne disorders. To learn more, visit the Web at www.lyme.org or call the 24-hour hotline at 800/886-LYME.

ESP Extra

A Job Well Done

Dean Guernsey

Oregon library coordinator Carolyn Mead loves to teach students to love reading.

Fostering a Love of Reading

From instructional assistant to library coordinator, she brings kids and books together.

Name:
Carolyn Mead

Job Title:
Library coordinator

Local Affiliate:
Eagle Point (Oregon) Education Association—a merged unit of certified and classified members.

Experience:
18 years as an instructional assistant at Glenn D. Hale Elementary School, one year as library coordinator.

What people don't understand about my job:
Certified media specialists were cut from the elementary and middle school levels of our school system. School support employees—we're called library coordinators—now run the libraries.

Since I'm not certified, I can't teach library skills, but I can do most everything else to maintain a quality resource setting and help students find books for enjoyment or research.

What I do:
Every class comes to see me once a week for 30 minutes. I read the students a story, and we talk. For example, during Black History Month, I read them *More Than Anything Else*, a book about Booker T. Washington's discovery and love of reading.

In the story, Washington had a book with marks in it that he didn't understand. A man showed him how to read, and he said, "I have entered a new world!"

I love working with children and seeing that same light go on. Fostering their love of reading is what I do, by working with students to nurture that hunger to want to read more.

My credentials:
I've been working with elementary children for 19 years now.

Continuing education:
We have a unique and ongoing staff development program at Eagle Point for library coordinators. We meet at a different library each month to help each other out on projects or share tips and ideas for improvement.

One certified media specialist remains at Eagle Point and is housed in our high school. She attends meetings when she can and is always available to answer questions as needed. I can apply my new learning immediately when I get back to my building.

Taking advantage of district staff development opportunities, Association conferences, and being involved in my local NEA affiliate—I'm now co-chair of the executive council—have also helped me grow.

A challenge I have met:
When my principal asked me if I would like to become library coordinator, I was scared at first, because I felt I didn't know enough.

In my 19 years at this school, I had stepped up to many challenges in the past, learning along the way.

At one time, I learned a cafeteria accounting system and did everything from punching lunch tickets—a wonderful way to learn names—to running reports and keeping records. I knew I could tackle new tasks—but manage an entire library? I realized this was an opportunity to move on and grow.

With little time for training, I networked with a library coordinator from nearby Grants Pass. She spent the day with me, explaining scanning techniques and other tips from her years of experience running a K-6 media center.

I'm here today and loving every minute of running a well-organized media center.

How I help students learn:
Let me give you an example: One afternoon, a student came in to look up information about an animal that I had never heard of, but together we dug around and found it. It was exciting for both of us.

It opens up a whole new world to children when you put a book in their hands. They're as excited as I am when a new book arrives.

—Tudi Harwood

To contact Carolyn Mead, send E-mail to meadc@gdh.eaglepnt.k12.or.us.

Tips from Carolyn Mead

On Kids and Colleagues

On dealing with kids:
Students need to be encouraged to feel they can achieve. You can be the light in their lives with a positive attitude, love, and an understanding that all kids can learn.

If you love children, they know it. Helping them understand that someone really cares about them is so important to learning.

On dealing with other school employees:
I see myself as someone who not only serves children, but also serves my fellow Association members through my involvement and leadership. Since my Association colleagues are both teachers and support employees, I see us all as education employees, all working together to help the children.

News You Can Use

Carolyn Campbell, a support staffer in Maplewood (New Jersey) Middle School's guidance office, coordinates her NEA local affiliate's professional development programs for teachers and ESP.

Rachelle Umenson

ESP Helping Kids Learn

Diversity's Details

Like many older suburbs, Maplewood and South Orange, New Jersey, have changed in the past 25 years from mostly white towns into multiethnic communities.

The new mixture of ethnicities, races, cultures, and languages means new demands on local educators. And that's where Carolyn Campbell, a support staffer in the guidance office, comes in.

Campbell coordinates the South Orange Maplewood Education Association's professional improvement programs, which now include training to help educators deal with the dramatic changes in student needs.

Area teachers and school support employees attend monthly after-school sessions to listen to guest speakers present the latest research on working effectively across cultures.

To run "Learning and Growing in a Multicultural Community," the all-inclusive local Association of 700 ESP and teachers gets help from an NEA Urban Grant (see article, next column).

If you're surprised to hear that a support educator oversees a professional development program that includes teachers, Campbell's not.

"You can't imagine how much help a local needs to run effective programs for its members," she says.

Campbell's advice to other aspiring ESP leaders: "You have to stay involved, see where there's a need, and see what you can do to help."

For more information, contact Carolyn Campbell, Maplewood Middle School, 7 Burnett St., Maplewood, NJ 07040, E-mail: camp104@ibm.net.

Training for Assistants

"Our goal is to help people get better at their jobs. The process makes us more responsible, accountable, and reflective."

That's how Minneapolis educational assistant Mary DeLuney describes the unique professional development program she coordinates for the city's 1,500 educational assistants.

In the past, assistants were allowed to participate in the professional development process, but the focus was on teachers. Now, thanks to the Minneapolis Federation of Educational Assistants Local #59—a local in NEA's state affiliate, Education Minnesota—assistants are in the training loop.

Local #59, with help from the Minneapolis school district, won a two-year, $99,000 grant from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

The grant helps pay for a new level of training for educational assistants. They're learning how to write individual professional development plans—based on the district's educational agenda, their schools' improvement plans, and their own goals.

Many assistants, Deluney says, want to improve their skills in boosting student reading and math achievement and working with families.

And assistants are learning to define objectives and come up with strategies for meeting them. They're finding ways to measure their progress, and they're learning how to work with support teams of other assistants, teachers, and community members.

The grant pays DeLuney's salary as project coordinator and educational assistant Richard Lockett's salary as lead mentor. It also pays stipends for 12 mentors working around the city.

For more information, contact Mary DeLuney, Teacher and Instructional Services, 925 Delaware St., S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55414, 612/627-2031.

NEA Grants Boost Learning

Both the Schaumburg (Illinois) Education Association and the Education Employees Organization are helping families in their community as they begin the child-rearing process.

The Birmingham (Alabama) Education Association and Birmingham Public Schools sponsor a monthly show on the public access cable channel dealing with community concerns.

And the Virginia Beach Education Association is continuing its NEA Learning Lab, a collaborative program to help teachers, staff, and administrators improve student achievement.

What do these efforts have in common? They are all being supported by NEA Urban Grants.

The NEA Urban Grant Program awards $4,000 each to 25 NEA local affiliates with 500 or more members, to help them develop member leadership in education reform.

The deadline for applications is September 30. For more information, contact NEA Affiliate Capacity Building, Urban Initiatives Program, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7155. Send E-mail to Lrobinson@nea.org.

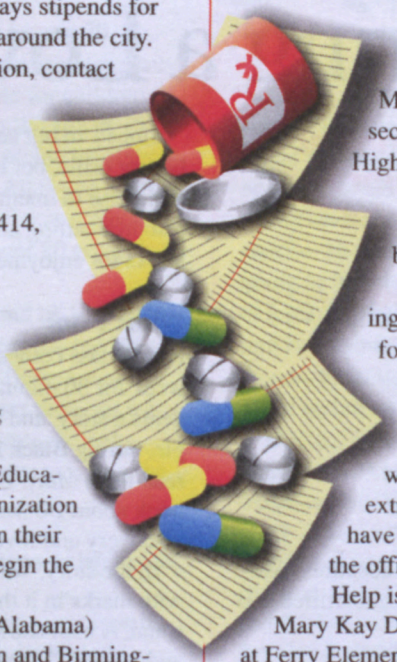
ESP Keeping Kids Safe, Healthy, and Well-Nourished

Dispensing Medications

Even before she was asked to dispense student medications, Alaska school secretary Linda Taylor had a "tremendous workload."

"Now," she says, "I have to make sure the school nurse, who is only at our school three afternoons a week, has all the proper paperwork on file to make it legal for me to dispense. We also need to have the doctor fax us documentation.

"It takes a lot of time away from my secretarial duties to see that all legalities are met. And frankly," Taylor adds, "this responsibility scares me."



Taylor's not alone. Marcia Farr, senior secretary at North Salem High School in Oregon, follows careful procedures outlined by her administration.

"Whoever is dispensing medication must focus entirely on the student," Farr says.

"Because interruptions are constant, we have found that it's extremely important to have at least two people in the office during that time."

Help is essential, adds Mary Kay Dinverno, a secretary at Ferry Elementary in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan. "Sometimes I'll have 50 students lined up at my desk for a wide variety of medications."

Without set procedures in place, Dinverno devised parental permission and dosage documentation forms she instituted with her principal's approval.

"My concern is for the safety of the children," Dinverno says. "There's so much room for error. We think we're doing a good job because we document

in three ways," she adds, "but I see this situation growing."

If you've got similar concerns, *Providing Safe Health Care: The Role of Educational Support Personnel* can help. This NEA publication provides critical information on legal responsibilities, plus suggestions on how to get proper training and supervision, and how the Association can help.

Copies are available from the NEA Professional Library for $4.95 plus $2.50 s&h. Call 800/229-4200 and ask for stock #1876-1. Or read the entire publication on the Web at www.nea.org/esp/resource/safecare.htm.

A Fair, Accurate Census

"We can't proclaim that our children count if we're not even willing to count them accurately."

—Children's Defense Fund

If you care about kids, care about this: In 1990, the Census undercounted the U.S. population by 4 million people—more than half of whom were children, mostly living in urban and rural areas.

If next year's Census undercounts in the same fashion, it will miss 52,000 children in Los Angeles alone—that's enough to fill 77 schools!

Census results are used to determine funding levels for dozens of key programs involving children and education, including Title I and special education grants, Head Start, family violence, crime prevention, and health care programs. If children in a community are undercounted, they will not receive their fair share of funds.

Education support employees can make a big difference in improving the accuracy of Census 2000 by being a part-time Census-taker or by helping children and their families understand the importance of taking part.

To learn more, visit the Census Bureau on the Web at www.census.gov, or call the Census Bureau public information office at 301/457-3030.

Disability Rights

A Guide to Disability Rights Laws, a free, 14-page booklet from the U.S. Department of Justice, provides a brief overview of eight federal laws that protect the disabled.

To order a copy in English or Spanish, call the ADA Information Line at 800/514-0301 (voice), 800/514-0383 (TDD). On the Web: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/publicat.htm. Automated Fax: call 800/514-0301 and ask for #3103.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

School bus drivers are among the more than 7 million people who hold federal Commercial Driver's Licenses and are subject to mandatory drug and alcohol testing under the provisions of the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991.

The Federal Highway Administration has published a brochure that explains these testing requirements. It's available online in English at www.fhwa.dot.gov/omc/drug_alc.html and in Spanish at www.fhwa.dot.gov/omc/dr_al_sp.htm.

For more information, contact the Federal Highway Administration Division Office in your state.

Allan Smith

Mary DeLuney, an educational assistant herself, was recently hired to run a professional development program for 1,500 educational assistants in Minneapolis.

ESP Keeping Schools Running

Deferred Maintenance

The median public school district had 12 full-time custodial, four full-time maintenance, and two full-time grounds personnel in the 1997-98 school year.

That information comes from *American School and University* magazine's 27th annual maintenance and operations cost survey of more than 5,000 public school districts with enrollments of more than 600 students.

Another of the study's findings: "Decades of deferred maintenance, insufficient building upkeep procedures, and years of siphoning dollars from maintenance budgets have significantly contributed to the current condition of our nation's schools."

Read the summary report online at www.asumag.com or call 913/341-1300 for details.

NAEOP Annual Conference

Looking for ways to overcome your own and others' fear of change, revamp your thinking style, and develop a team atmosphere in the workplace?

This summer's annual conference of the National Association of Education Office Professionals may be the place.

The conference will take place July 17-23 at the Hyatt Regency in Wichita, Kansas. Registration is $75 for NAEOP members and $115 for nonmembers. Hotel costs are extra.

For more information, contact NAEOP, P.O. Box 12619, Wichita, KS 67277, 316/942-4822, Fax: 316/942-7100. On the Web: http://naeop.org/.

Extra Special People

Sharon Carelli, a paraprofessional in Shasta County, California, works wonders for at-risk students through the Pioneer High School Career Guidance Center, which she established and now runs.

"Sharon has exhibited the utmost in competency, enthusiasm, and efficiency," says James Long, president of the Oak Park Classified Association. "She is truly a role model."

Para Sharon Carelli runs a career center for teens.

While working at the guidance center and serving as a local and state Association leader, Carelli earned her associate degree.

Notes a good friend of Iowa school bus driver **Allen Wilson**: "Al is totally surrounded by a negative-free zone, and it shows in his attitude toward his work, the students, fellow workers, and everything that he does."

Wilson, who drives in West Delaware, doesn't do things by halves. He's certified in first aid, CPR, and assertiveness training, and holds a Class B CDL with certification in air brakes.

In his community, Wilson is a Scout master, Little League coach, and Knights of Columbus leader.

In addition, Wilson serves as president of his NEA local affiliate, chief negotiator, and privatization fighter—having persuaded his school board to drop plans to farm out transportation work.

You never know what alias Florida teacher assistant **Marjorie Merrill** will be using when you run into her at Skyview Elementary in Pinellas County.

She may be the Pumpkin Lady in October or the Queen of Hearts in February. Whatever the disguise, she delights children while dispensing encouragement and kudos for good behavior.

Merrill, who works in the Students Targeted for Academic Recognition and Success (STARS) program, keeps everybody minding their manners, even adults like Gloria Smith, president of the Pinellas ESP Association.

"In December, we are 'as good as we can be' because we know Mrs. Claus—our own Margie—is making that list and checking it twice," chuckles Smith.

Illinois ESP **Shirley Parks** is literally the most visible employee in Rockford Public School District #205. As the district's receptionist, she knows most everything happening in area schools. Better yet, Parks doesn't just talk about what's happening, she acts.

Parks has attended security workshops and written up ideas to make her building safer, mentored students, and been an active member of the PTO. Now she volunteers at her grandchildren's school. In her community, Parks has raised money for the Heart, Cancer, and Child Abuse Funds.

Many elementary kids call Missouri school engineer **Forrest "Woody" Hay** "papa."

Hay, who works at Mark Twain School in St. Joseph, does more for his school community than attend the boiler, mow grass, and clean classrooms. He tries to fill the need for attention many children have, while watching for the needs of kids and adults alike.

When Hay recently spotted a new teacher worried about classroom control, he referred her to the president of St. Joseph NEA. This veteran teacher reassured the novice and encouraged her to use the training and skills she already had.

Hay's unique schedule—he clocks in from 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.—allows St. Joseph residents to have access to his school building after school hours.

Missouri NEA recently gave Hay a Horace Mann Friend of Education Award. But the best prize came from fifth grader Terri Willis, who gushed afterward: "I just adore him. He's not only good at his job, he's great to be around."

Vita Smith, a newly retired guidance department secretary/assistant, has left a big void at Wisconsin's Tomahawk High School.

For 23 years, explains guidance counselor Nancy Herbison, "Vita was absolutely vital in our guidance program. Vita helped to develop an easier scholarship form for students, she processed grade reports quickly so that the teachers could check grades, and she helped to create a more organized and easy-to-read registration booklet for our students."

Smith also gets high marks for dealing with the problems of Spanish-speaking foreign exchange students. She was able to speak to them in their own language, helping take the pressure off their stay and translating for host parents.

Smith also built an impressive record as an advocate, of both minority students in the district and of her ESP coworkers.

NEA members around the country were saddened to hear of the recent death of **Curtis Crawford**, an exceptional paraeducator pictured in the April issue of *NEA Today*. If you'd like to send a card or make a contribution to his wife and children, please write to the Crawford Family, 2014 LaSalle Dr., Valdosta, GA 31602.

Question of the Month

How do you promote your schools in your community?

"My NEA local affiliate has formed a committee we call EmbrAce. It houses our community action, recognition, and scholarship activities.

"This year, EmbrAce sponsored a community coat drive. With the help of local newspapers, radio stations, and many businesses, we were able to give away more than 350 coats to needy kids in our community. We hope this drive grows each year, as the need was overwhelming.

"This is just one more way for us to represent ourselves in the community as the caring and involved folks we are."

—Pat Walton, Greater Albany ACE President, Albany, Oregon

"When potential home buyers come to look at our school, I promote our principal, Mike Otto. He's one of the best, very rare. He's here for the kids, not the paycheck. He eats lunch with kids every day, treats them special, and understands them.

"Otto uses a different kind of discipline—he shows care, concern, and love. The kids love him to death.

"And there's another way the community learns what's special about school employees. Like other buildings in our district, my school, Graydon Elementary, has a 'Care Team' that gets together each month.

"Our Care Team uses pancake meal money to buy Christmas presents for kids at Graydon and to make sure they all have winter coats. And if there's some sort of family tragedy, the team pays a visit.

"In my own way, I promote our school by working with students with behavioral problems. If they're good all week, I'll give a half hour a day to play basketball or football with them.

"They struggle all week not to do something wrong. I've kept several kids out of trouble this way."

—Joan Norman, custodian, Parkville, Missouri

"We have conferences that parents attend to see not only what their child is doing, but what school personnel are doing. We also have a school-home partnership meeting once a month, where parents and teachers meet.

"More important, I think, is that we get involved with the community through community service.

"Every year, 100 of our students from the high school and middle school go out and volunteer for Special Olympics. And our various high school clubs perform service in the community, like beach sweeping, going to nursing homes once a month, performing children's theater, holding canned food drives, and checking seat belts.

"All of these good deeds—and the many more I haven't mentioned—show the community that our students get more than just reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic. They also learn how to be part of a community."

—Jeanette Martinez, vocational transition support assistant, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina

Got an Answer?

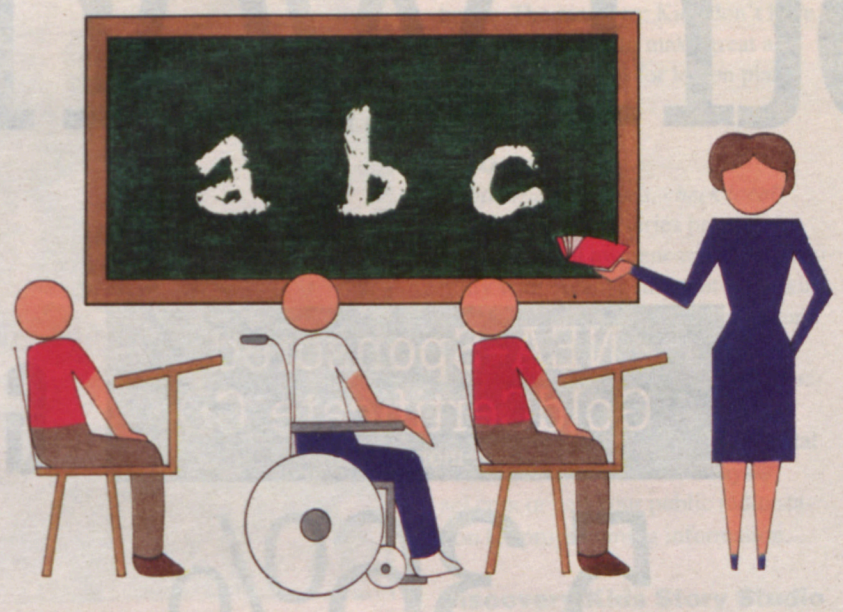
What have you done to improve your school building?

Send your reply, along with your name, job title, and town or school district to ESPInput@list.nea.org or Fax it to ESP Extra at 202/822-7206.

Rights Watch

IDEA Ruling: How It Adds Up

A landmark Supreme Court decision declares schools must cover one-on-one health care for disabled students.



Michelle Thoburn

Garret Frey was only four years old when a motorcycle accident severed his spinal column.

Now a high school sophomore in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, he motors around his school in a specially equipped wheelchair that allows him to steer by blowing into a straw.

Because he is paralyzed from the neck down, Garret needs constant one-on-one assistance to feed him, perform bladder catheterizations, suction his tracheotomy tube, and monitor his ventilator.

When he first went to school, Garret's 18-year-old aunt tended to his health care needs. Later, his family used the proceeds from an insurance settlement to hire a licensed practical nurse to care for him at school.

In 1993, his mother asked the Cedar Rapids Community school district to foot the bill for Garret's school-related health care. When the District refused, she sued.

Frey argued that the district should pay for his nurse under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

In an important 7-2 ruling handed down in March, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed.

IDEA requires schools to provide disabled students with whatever "health services" the student needs to attend school—except that schools don't have to provide "medical services."

In an opinion by Justice John Paul Stevens in *Cedar Rapids Community School District* v. *Garret F.*, the High Court said that a "medical service" is a service that can be performed only by a licensed physician. Since Garret's medical needs can be met by a nurse or trained layperson, the Court reasoned, it is a "health service" for which the school must pay.

The Court rejected the school district's plea that hiring a full-time nurse to care for Garret would be too costly.

"The District cannot limit educational access simply by pointing to the limitations of existing staff," the Court said, even if it means that the school has "to hire specially trained personnel to meet disabled student needs."

Dissenting, Justice Clarence Thomas complained that the majority "blindsides unwary States with fiscal obligations that they could not have anticipated.

"Congress enacted IDEA to increase the *educational* opportunities available to disabled children, not to provide medical care for them," he emphasized.

It's too early to assess the impact of the Court's ruling, but critics warn that it imposes yet another burden on schools, an unfunded mandate that will drain resources from regular education programs.

The Cedar Rapids school district claims it will cost $30,000 to $40,000 a year to comply with the Court's order. "Who is going to provide that money?" asked Sue Seitz, the school district's attorney.

The National School Boards Association estimates that there are 17,000 "medically fragile" students who will need continuous assistance from a nurse or aide—services with a total price tag of $500 million a year. NSBA executive director Anne Bryant criticizes the Court's decision, saying "it takes the focus of schools away from being educators" and makes them "medical service providers."

And in the end, a *Los Angeles Times* editorial cautioned, the decision "may shortchange more students than it helps."

Advocates for the disabled were pleased by the ruling and downplayed its potential impact on school coffers.

Judith Heumann, assistant secretary for special education at the U.S. Department of Education, said the decision "will help advance the inclusion of disabled children into society. It says they have a right to get an education in an inclusive setting."

Mary Fitzsimmons, a Chicago-area mother of a disabled student, told the Associated Press: "Every child should have the right to what they need, and if that means spending a little more money so that the child can have the same benefits that other children get, that should be done."

Other advocates argue that these costs can be borne by Medicaid in many cases, and that teachers and aides can be trained to perform most health care services.

The problem is money, or rather the lack of it. The federal government is not paying its fair share. When IDEA was first enacted, Congress promised to fund 40 percent of the costs of educating students with disabilities. But then Congress reneged.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the average excess cost of educating a child with disabilities is $7,021. Yet the federal government contributes only $702 for each disabled student. That's just 10 percent. It would take additional appropriations of $13.5 billion per year to "fully" fund IDEA at the 40 percent level.

People on both sides of the debate agree on at least one thing: Homebound students with chronic health problems that require constant monitoring will now be able to attend school full-time.

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

Whose Job Is It?

The Supreme Court has spoken.

Under IDEA, school districts now have to provide disabled students with a wide range of quasi-medical services while at school. (See main story.) These include cleaning tracheotomy tubes, monitoring ventilator and other medical support systems, performing bladder catheterizations, and providing ostomy care.

To avoid the costs of hiring nurses or health care aides, some school districts may order teachers or other staff to perform these tasks. Can they do that?

IDEA doesn't answer this question, although it does require that service providers must be "appropriately and adequately prepared and trained."

The decision about who will do these jobs is left up to states and local school districts.

What recourse does an educator have? This issue of who provides health care services can be addressed by collective bargaining, state law, or the student's individualized education program (IEP).

The Michigan Education Association, for example, has developed model contract language guaranteeing that only school nurses can be required to provide health services, except in an emergency.

School employees in Iowa are protected by a state law recognizing their right to refuse to perform "special health services" and "intrusive non-emergency medical services" for students.

Many states have on the books "Nursing Practices Acts" that prohibit non-licensed persons from performing "nursing" services. But, frequently, these acts have exceptions for school employees.

A bill in the Georgia legislature to restrict teachers from providing medical care to students was derailed this spring by concerns about the cost of putting a nurse in every school.

A student's IEP also can specify the training or qualifications for the person who is to provide the health care services, such as a licensed practical nurse.

When and if these questions arise, school employees should always consult with their UniServ representative, because laws vary greatly from state to state.

—M.D.S.

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Heads Up!

TV Tips

Celebrate the Century

CNN, Sundays, May 2-July 4, 8-9 p.m. ET. This 10-part documentary chronicles the events of the past 100 years. The music of the century accompanies coverage of the Russian revolution, the Lindbergh flight, the women's suffrage movement, modern wars, AIDS, cloning, and more.

Wild Europe

PBS, Sunday-Tuesday, May 2-4, 8-10 p.m. ET. This documentary examines how the growth of European civilization has affected ecosystems in its seas, mountains, arctic regions, grasslands, forests, and cities. See www.pbs.org for videocassette availability.

Mobil Masterpiece Theatre: Great Expectations

PBS, Sunday-Monday, May 9-10, 9-10:30 p.m. ET, check local listings. In this adaptation of the Charles Dickens novel, a young orphan struggles to better himself amid the manipulations of an escaped criminal, the eccentric Miss Havisham, a mysterious benefactor, and the beautiful but contemptuous Estella.

Joan of Arc

CBS, Sunday, May 16 and Tuesday, May 18, 9-11 p.m. ET. This miniseries is based on the life of the illiterate peasant girl who, guided by visions, led the French army against the English. KIDSNET is providing a print study guide as well as supplementary online study materials. Students can "speak" with the historical figure herself during a special online chat. Visit www.cbsjoanofarc.com.

Voyage to the Milky Way

PBS, Wednesday, May 19, 8-10 p.m. ET, check local listings. This program takes a practical, realistic look at the forces, ambitions, and politics driving the race for long-distance space travel and colonization.

Dear America: A Journey to the New World

HBO, May, check local listings. This half-hour show looks at American history through a young girl's eyes.

Young Mem endures 65 grueling days on the Mayflower, only to encounter mysterious natives, untamed wilderness, and extreme hardship.

People's Century

PBS, Monday-Thursday, June 14-17, 9-11 p.m. ET; Mondays, June 21 and 28, 9-11 p.m. ET; Monday, July 5, 9-10 p.m. ET, check local listings. Thirteen new one-hour episodes look back at the 20th century through the stories of those who witnessed the rise and fall of governments, popular movements, prosperity and depression, race and gender struggles, religious extremism, and explosive growth in technology, medicine, population, and ecological awareness.

Check out www.pbs.org/wgbh/peoplescentury for a teacher's guide.

Art Attack

WAM!, Sundays 4-5 and 7-8 a.m. and Monday-Friday 8:30-9 a.m. and 2:30-3 p.m. ET. This program demonstrates easy-to-make, inexpensive art projects using simple objects found around the house. The message: Kids don't have to be great artists to make great art. Call 303/771-7700 for lesson plan information.

ECO-Essays

Public radio stations, check local listings. This new series promotes environmental awareness and responsibility with creative, thought-provoking essays backed by sounds from nature. On Fridays, the essays are read by children. The pieces stress a constructive approach to ecology, covering science, lifestyles, and environmental observations. E-mail ecoessays@aol.com or call your public radio station for programming information.

Discovery Kids Story Studio

Discovery Channel, Sundays, 10:30-11 a.m. ET. Written by and for kids, this new series features "mini-movies" based on stories sent in by middle-schoolers on topics ranging from real childhood issues to fantasies. See www.discovery.com for details.

Kinetic City

Public radio stations, check local listings. This half-hour program from the American Association for the Advancement of Science features four teens who solve a weekly mystery through scientific investigation. For information about the accompanying book series, or to hear entire episodes, visit www.kineticcity.com. The site also features the Kinetic City Cyber Club, where kids can play science games, try experiments, and help the crew solve science mysteries.

Shoot for the Moon

PBS, check local listings. Produced for and by girls, this half-hour series from New Moon provides a forum for girls and young women to express their thoughts and feelings about the unique issues they face during adolescence. Call your local PBS station for programming information, or call New Moon at 800/381-4743. Visit www.newmoon.org for resources.

KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., provides these listings. For additional listings and information, check the Web at www.kidsnet.org.

school stories

Episodes of* School Stories*—produced by NEA and The Learning Channel to provide an insightful look inside America's classrooms—are now on videotape and available from the NEA Professional Library. Here are just a few of the titles in stock:

Technology: Hype or Hope?

Just what can schools do with the fancy new equipment that will wire their classrooms to the Internet? Is it worth it? Travel to Princeton, New Jersey, to watch educators and the community debate questions about being connected for the 21st century. Stock #7614-1-00-F, $16.95.

Space Camp Challenge

Sixteen special education students work their way through a program designed to challenge America's gifted and talented. Hear the story of how imagination and proper support gave them the confidence to succeed. Stock #7617-6-00-F, $16.95.

Single-Sex Classes?

For the past few years, boys and girls at Marsteller Middle School in Virginia have been attending both single-sex and mixed classes as part of a gender study. Find out what the teachers and students have discovered. Stock #7619-2-00-F, $16.95.

Great School by Design

Why have more than 8,000 educators traveled to Chula Vista, California, to visit a small elementary school? Walk the halls and classrooms to learn how a school's design creates a winning environment for an incredibly diverse student body. Stock #7621-4-00-F, $16.95.

Class Act: A Teacher Profile

Here's the story of Rhode Island teacher Mary Lee Drouin, who uses her performing ability—along with passion, imagination, and creativity—to teach English literature to her high school students. Stock #7610-9-00-F, $19.95.

To order any of the above titles, call the NEA Professional Library at 800/229-4200 or on the Web at www.nea.org/books.

Heads Up

Free or Inexpensive

A Drop of Water

Aimed at students ages 10 and up, *A World in a Drop of Water* explains the invisible, single-celled organisms—amoebas, paramecium, and euglena—that inhabit a single drop of pond water. $3.95 plus $5 s&h. Available in bookstores or contact Dover Publications, Inc., 31 East 2nd St., Mineola, NY 11501, 516/294-7000.

Cartoons

Find out what kids of all ages have to say about important current issues in the latest edition of *Editorial Cartoons by Kids*. Includes more than 100 cartoons drawn by students in grades 3 to 12. $10.95 plus $4 s&h. Contact Knowledge Unlimited, Inc., P.O. Box 52, Madison, WI 53701, 800/356-2303. Fax 800/618-1570. On the Web www.thekustore.com.

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AIDS Quilt

A Name on the Quilt explains how one family dealt with the loss of a loved one to the AIDS virus. The 32-page book for children 5 and up includes color illustrations. $16 plus approximately $3 s&h. In bookstores or contact Simon & Schuster Mail Order, 200 Old Tappan Rd., Old Tappan, NJ 07675, 800/223-2348. On the Web: www.SimonSayskids.com.

Math Dictionary

With over 600 defined math terms, *Math Dictionary for Young People* provides all the vocabulary students in grades 4-6 will need. This hardback book also includes diagrams and illustrations. $23 plus approximately $4 s&h. Discounts available with a Macmillan Publishing account. Call 800/428-5331or Fax 800/882-8583.

Science Experiments

Science is all around us, but where, exactly, can you find it? *Awesome Experiments in Electricity & Magnetism* provides instructions for more than 70 electrical and magnetic experiments suitable for high school students. $17.95 plus $5 s&h. Contact Sterling Publishing, 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016, 800/367-9692. On the Web: www.sterlingpub.com.

Black Culture

Want students to learn more about African American culture? Knowledge Unlimited offers these three books:

1) For grades 4 and up, *A Drawing in the Sand: The Story of African American Art* includes illustrations and photographs. $19.95 plus $4 s&h.

2) *Sweet Words So Brave: The Story of African American Literature*, for grades 4 and up, describes 250 years of African American writing in America. $19.95 plus $4 s&h.

3) *Be a Friend: The Story of African*

Heads Up

American Music teaches children grades 3 and up about five distinct African American musical styles—spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, and rap. An audiocassette with eight songs is included. $15.96 plus $4 s&h.

Contact Knowledge Unlimited, Inc., P.O. Box 52, Madison WI 53701, 800/356-2303. Fax 800/618-1570. On the Web, check out www.thekustore.com.

Info on Africa

The Africa Policy Information Center offers two posters full of statistics on Africa. *Africa's Women* and *Changing Africa* list population, school enrollment, and mortality rates by region. $2 per poster plus 15 percent of total purchase for s&h. Bulk discounts available. Contact the Africa Policy Information Center, 110 Maryland Ave., N.W., Suite 509, Washington DC 20002, 202/546-7961. Fax 202/546-1545. E-mail: apic@africapolicy.org. On the Web: www.africapolicy.org.

Designs on Money

As part of an educational effort surrounding the issuance of the redesigned $20 note, the U.S. Treasury is offering educational teaching tips, posters, brochures, interactive CD-ROMs, and educational videos to teachers for use in their classrooms. Free. For details, call the interactive Fax line at 202/622-2040 and request document #2641.

Great Books

Just out: the first five books in the 20-book series, *Penguin Great Books of the Twentieth Century*. *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Age of Innocence*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, and *The Adventures of Augie March* are currently available and range in price from $8.95 to $14.95 plus $2 s&h per book. Contact Penguin Putnam Inc., 405 Murray Hill Parkway, East Rutherford, NJ 07073, 800/253-6476.

Beyond Book Reports

Tired of ordinary book reports? *Beyond Book Reports* is designed to encourage kids in grades 2-6 to share their insights into literature through individual reading projects and peer group circles. This book offers 50 response activities to help develop great readers and writers. $16.95 plus $2.25 s&h. Contact Scholastic Professional Books, P.O. Box 7502, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 800/325-6149 or 800/724-6527. Fax 573/635-5881.

Leonardo

An activity book full of illustrations, *Leonardo da Vinci for Kids: His Life and Ideas* teaches kids 8 and up about the life, accomplishments, and times of this great painter, sculptor, architect, musician, engineer, and scientist. $16.95 plus $5 s&h. Available in bookstores or from Chicago Review Press, 814 N. Franklin St., Chicago, IL 60610, 800/888-4741. On the Web: www.ipgbook. com.

REPORT CARD

Social Skills: WORKS WELL WITH OTHERS

Evaluation:

Saturn was recently evaluated
by a number of educators.
And it looks like we got a pretty good response.

Not too long ago, a group of educators came to the Saturn plant, armed with plenty of paper and pencils, to find out how our union works with our management. And since it doesn't really qualify as a trade secret, we told them: We work as though we're on the same team—because we are. So when we make decisions, we make them together, and when we need to solve a problem, we do that together too. Now, some of these people have developed similar partnerships in their own districts. So we formed a partnership with the NEA, and we started an awards program, to recognize school districts that use teamwork to improve the quality of their schools. So when a school board works together with teachers, toward a common goal, we give the district an award—because we think what they're trying to do is important. (Besides, after years of giving out stars and happy faces, they deserve some encouragement too.)

SATURN UAW

For more information about the Saturn/UAW partnership award, or to nominate your school district, please call us at 1-800-738-1817. For more information about Saturn, visit our Web site at www.saturn.com. ©1999 Saturn Corporation.

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Heads Up

Announcements

NEA Activists

Interested in running for local, state, or national Association office?

NEA will offer "Campaigning to Win" training next November for 50 members who want to learn how to assess their readiness to run, plan a campaign, raise money, project their best image, and speak to their constituencies.

The program is open to all NEA members, except those who plan to announce a candidacy between September 1, 1999 and August 31, 2000.

Contact your NEA state affiliate for an application after July 1. For more information, contact NEA staffer Betty Jeung at 202/822-7736 or send E-mail to bjeung@nea.org.

Scholarship Scams

"This scholarship is guaranteed or your money back." If you see those words, be warned that the scholarship may be a rip-off, says the Federal Trade Commission.

Who's Who Among American High School Students is launching a public awareness campaign to educate students, parents, and teachers about scholarship services that exploit students by charging hefty fees.

Who's Who is sending materials, along with the FTC publication, *OUCH...Students Getting Stung Trying to Find $$$ for College*, to guidance counselors at every high school in the country. For details, go to www.honoring.com on the Web.

Grants

AP/Wide World

Jordan Fundamentals

NEA's foundation, the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, has officially launched its newest initiative—the Jordan Fundamentals Grant Program. Applications for the program's $2,500 grants must be postmarked by May 15.

For details on Jordan Fundamentals, as well as on the Foundation's Leadership Grants, go to the Web at www.nfie.org or call 202/822-7840.

Megaskills

The Home and School Institute is sponsoring $500 grants called the Dorothy Rich Awards. Ten grants are available for teachers and administrators who are working in compensatory education and making an effort to involve parents in their children's education. Deadline: September 15.

For details, contact MegaSkills Education Center of the Home and School Institute, 1500 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20005, 202/466-3633. Fax 202/833-1400. E-mail: HSIDRA@erols.com. On the Web: www.MegaSkillsHSI.org.

Music and Science

The Texaco Foundation's "Early Notes: The Sound of Children Learning" and "Touch Science: Hands-on Learning" for Kids and Communities grants are designed to encourage the enhancement of musical knowledge and scientific exploration with the help of educational partnerships.

Ten $100,000 grants will be given. For details on the Web: www.texaco.com/corporate/foundation/guidelines_home.htm. Or contact the Texaco Foundation, Music Education RFP, 2000 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10650, 914/253-7767.

Rural Education

The National Rural Education Association will give ten $250 minigrants to rural K-12 classroom teachers whose school or students' homes are in a community served by a Rural Electric Cooperative. The money is to be used for a student project dealing with some aspect of energy or electricity.

Deadline: June 15. On the Web: www.colostate.edu/Orgs/NREA. Send proposals to Rural Teacher Mini-Grants, c/o NREA Headquarters, 246 Education Building, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1588, 970/491-7022.

Awards

Cool School

McGehee Elementary School in Arkansas has been named *Education World*'s 1998 National "Cool School of the Year" for creating and maintaining a school Web site and integrating the practical applications of technology in its curriculum.

Cisco Systems has given the school $10,000 of networking equipment. See the award-winning site at http://se.sesc.k12.ar.us/mcgehee/index.htm.

Chadwick Winner

NEA member Marian Kingsland of Hoonah City Schools in Hoonah, Alaska, was named Chadwick's of Boston 1998 National Teacher of the Year and awarded $1,500.

To nominate a teacher for next year's contest, write up to 250 words on the teacher's exceptional guidance and encouragement to students and mail it to Chadwick's of Boston Teacher of the Year, 946 Great Plain Avenue, P.O. Box 151, Needham, MA 02492. For details, E-mail teachof99@aol.com. Deadline: July 31.

Bright Orange Teachers

Two NEA members are among the winners of the new Bright Orange Teacher Contest, sponsored by Nickelodeon. The teachers were recognized for their design of original lesson plans that go along with Nick News, a kids news magazine program.

Vivian Achterberg, seventh grade teacher at Lakeshore Middle School in Stevensville, Michigan, created a lesson on the value of the Internet by taking her students on a scavenger hunt on the Web.

Marcia Cooke, special education teacher at Lafayette Elementary in Eureka, California, incorporated a Nick News program with several hands-on activities for her students with learning disabilities. To get rid of the notion "I can't," the kids held a mock funeral for the phrase.

On the Web at teachers.nick.com.

Events

Moms Online

iVillage.com is sponsoring "Take Your Mom Online" this Mother's Day. Children and mothers of all ages are encouraged to join Nancy Evans, cofounder of iVillage.com, and her 11-year-old daughter for a special online chat on Sunday, May 9, at 4 p.m. For a step-by-step guide, contact Stacey Sanders at 212/221-1713.

Mars Millennium Project

The J. Paul Getty Trust along with the White House, U.S. Department of Education, NASA, and the National Endowment for the Arts are joining together to sponsor the Mars Millennium Project.

Teams of students in grades K-12 will work with teachers, artists, scientists, and others to design the first community on the planet Mars.

Participation kits will be available in May. Research and design activities will officially begin in late 1999 or early 2000. To order a kit, contact the U.S. Department of Education at 877/433-7827 or call 310/274-8787, ext. 150. For details on the Web: www.mars2030.net.

Summer Workshops

The Center for Research on Women is offering several summer workshop opportunities. Teasing and Bullying—a workshop for K-5 grade teachers, school counselors, social workers, and principals—explores proactive curriculum strategies for teaching elementary students about teasing and bullying. The one-day workshop will be held June 22, 23, 24, or 25.

Also available, one-day workshops on sexual harassment and gender violence for all staff working with K-12 students.

All workshops will be held at Wellesley College Club in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Cost: $175 per day. Registration deadline: May 28. Contact Barkley Shafer at 781/283-2451 or Email: bshafer@wellesley.edu. On the Web: www.wellesley.edu/WCW.

Celebrate the Century Tour

Keep your eyes and ears open for the U.S. Postal Service's *Celebrate The Century Express* chugging through a town near you.

This four-car Amtrak train, full of audio/video monitors and multimedia 3-D displays, is designed to take its passengers through the 20th century, highlighting the history of the postal service.

The glow-in-the dark train covered

Heads Up

with images of U.S. postage stamps began its 18-month tour in March and will stop in more than 100 cities in more than 40 states through fall 2000.

For free education kits, available while supplies last, call 800/450-4636. On the Web: www.usps.com/ctc.

Scholarships

Target Scholarships

Target's "Take Charge of Education" program offers scholarships to teachers who wish to continue their education and to college-bound high school students.

All teachers from schools enrolled in Target's Take Charge of Education program are eligible to apply. Students entering their senior year of high school who are dedicated to improving their communities and who are going on to college the following year are eligible for the scholarship.

Four $10,000 awards will be handed out, along with two $1,000 scholarships at each store. Look for applications at your local Target store this summer or call 800/316-6142. Applications are due in November.

Contests

The Great Race

Is your high school-level vocational class interested in restoring or preparing a pre-1951 vehicle and entering it

in a 13-day cross-country race?

The History Channel is sponsoring the third annual X-Cup Division in its Great Race event to promote automotive education to America's high schoolers. Tom McRae, founder of the Great Race, will waive the entry fee for students in the X-Cup Division.

This year's race will begin in Georgia on June 6. For information or to sign up for next year's race, contact Carol McRae at 800/989-7223.

Rural Essays

The National Rural Education Association Foundation has announced a student essay contest. In the essays, students in three age groups—grades 3-5, grades 6-9, and high school—will describe creative ways rural schools and rural communities can work together to improve education.

Elementary school entries are limited to 250 words. Middle and high school entries are limited to 500 words. Deadline: June 15. For complete rules, look on the Web at www.colostate.edu/Orgs/NREA. Mail entries to Joe Newlin, Executive Director, NREA Headquarters, Room 246, Education Building, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1588, 970/491-7022. Email: jnewlin@colostate.edu.

Web Winners

Time and Again

MSNBC's Time and Again Web site offers both material from its television show, hosted by Jane Pauley, and special cyberprograms from its vast archives. These include speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr., interviews with world leaders and celebrities, and footage of past and current events.

You can even catch images from this year's Read Across America campaign, including interviews with celebrities and NEA leaders, footage of the worm-eating principal, plus a special cybershow on Dr. Seuss.

On the Web at www.msnbc.com/news/TIMEAGAIN_Front.asp.

Resources

Holocaust Catalog

A Holocaust Mini-Catalog: Children of the Holocaust, Tools for Teachers is full of classroom resources for teachers interested in developing lesson plans about the Holocaust years.

Sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League, the catalogue has ordering

information for publications, books written for and by children, videos, curriculum guides, newspapers, magazines, and CD-ROMs containing stories of children who were hidden during the Holocaust. For a free copy, call 800/343-5540. Fax 201/652-1973.

Learning Art Early

Young Children and the Arts: Making Creative Connections, offered by the Council of Chief State School Officers, can help parents and teachers develop art-based early childhood programs. $1.50 per copy for up to 10 copies. For details, call 202/336-7016. On the Web, go to http://aep-arts.org and look for "Arts Education Partnership" in the Highlights section.

Media Literacy

Concerned about impact of TV violence and commercialism on kids? Check out the Family and Community Critical Viewing Project's new videos and workbook, offered free.

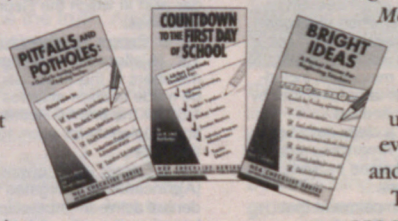
Contact your local cable company or write to the National Cable Television Association, 1724 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. On the Web: www.pta.org/programs/cvday.htm.

So your niece is going to be a teacher . . .

Or maybe it's your nephew — or even your son or daughter — who'll be graduating this spring and starting a brand-new teaching career in the fall.

The NEA Professional Library's *Graduation Gift Pack* may be just what your new teacher needs.

The Graduation Gift Pack features three great handbooks for teaching rookies, each one full of classroom-tested tips from veterans who know what works — and what doesn't.



Countdown to the First Day of School lays out a step-by-step checklist that'll have your favorite new teacher poised and ready to succeed the day the school doors open.

Pitfalls and Potholes: A Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes of Beginning Teachers offers a series of sensible strategies you'll never read in any textbook.

Bright Ideas: A Pocket Mentor for Beginning Teachers provides the sort of usable advice that every teacher needs and few teachers get.

Three great books, one great gift!

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The 1999 NEA Representative Assembly

This July, nearly 10,000 NEA members elected by their state and local colleagues will gather in Orlando, Florida, for the annual NEA Representative Assembly. The four-day RA is the Association's highest decision-making body. Delegates will be voting on proposed amendments to the NEA Standing Rules, Constitution, and Bylaws—all listed below—and electing the NEA president, vice president, and two members of the NEA Executive Committee. Interested in following the debate at this year's RA? Check out the NEA Web site at www.nea.org. On the site will be complete, day-by-day coverage of RA debates and actions, plus audio and text versions of major RA addresses. The action starts July 3.

Proposed Amendments to the NEA Standing Rules, Constitution, and Bylaws

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 1

TITLE: To assign two or more microphones located at or near the seating area of each state delegation on the Representative Assembly floor for the use of that delegation.

Rule 4. Seating Arrangements
(new) G. State delegations shall be assigned to speak at two (2) or more microphones in or near the area of the state delegation's seating, without changing the existing number of microphones usually used at the Representative Assembly.

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 25 delegates.)
Contact Person: Robert A. Staples, Maine

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment is intended to reduce crowding at microphones and ensure that all states have ready access to microphones on the Representative Assembly (RA) floor by assigning two or more microphones to each state delegation.

NEA Conference and Facilities Management staff who plan the RA now place approximately 40 microphones on the RA floor to afford every delegate reasonable access. Microphones are open for use by any delegate and not assigned to particular delegations.

The amendment's requirement that each state delegation be assigned the use of at least two microphones without changing the total number would necessitate assigning some microphones to two or more state affiliates.

Delegates from a particular state would be allowed to speak only from the microphones assigned to their state. Delegates waiting to be recognized would need to stay near their state's microphones and would not be able to speak from wherever in the Assembly hall they chose, as is now the case. The exception to this requirement would be delegates not customarily seated with particular state delegations, such as physically challenged delegates, members of the Executive Committee, or officers of the Association.

The occasional lack of clarity from the chair about which microphone a recognized delegate will be speaking from would be reduced because delegates would always speak from one of the microphones assigned to their state.

Amendments to the Standing Rules become effective immediately after passage. In the event this amendment is approved, delegates will be notified which microphones are assigned to their delegation.

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 2

TITLE: To increase to two (2) hours the amount of time the Representative Assembly is required to spend debating new business at all meetings after the first business meeting.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
K. (Fifth paragraph) Items of new business submitted in accordance with this section shall be the first business item at all business meetings except the first business meeting of the Representative Assembly and these new business items shall be considered for at least [one] two hours. (No other changes.)

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 25 delegates.)
Contact Person: Jon C. Aull, Maryland

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment increases from one hour to two hours the amount of time the Representative Assembly is required to devote to the consideration of new business at all business meetings after the first business meeting.

The intent is to reduce the amount of time needed to complete new business at the final business meeting of the Representative Assembly by requiring that more time be devoted to new business at earlier meetings.

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 3

TITLE: To require that members with points of information be recognized in the same order as speakers for and against, rather than being given preference in recognition.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
(new) **W**. Points of information (questions) shall be considered in order of receipt just as would any request to speak for or against an item and would therefore not be preferential in the same manner as points of order.

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 25 delegates.)
Contact Person: Karen Russell, California

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would require that the chair recognize speakers with points of information in the same manner as those speaking for or against an issue being debated.

Under the current administrative practice at the Representative Assembly, the chair alternately recognizes speakers for and against an issue, calling on speakers with points of information on a preferential basis as they seek recognition. This amendment would remove the preference for points of information during the regular debate. Points of information may still be called after debate on an item has been closed. Under the amendment, the chair could choose to recognize speakers with points of information alternating with speakers for and against the issue being debated.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT 1

TITLE: To require that NEA-Retired members be counted when computing the number of directors to which a state affiliate is entitled on the NEA Board of Directors and to require that directors representing NEA-Retired members be counted when computing representation entitlements on the Board for administrators, classroom teachers in higher education, and Active members employed in educational support positions.

Article V. Board of Directors
Section 1. Composition
The Board shall consist of (a) at least one (1) director from each association affiliated with the Association as a state affiliate, (b) six (6) directors for the retired members of the Association, and (c) three (3) directors for the Student members of the Association.

Each state unit shall be entitled to an additional director for each 20,000 Active and Retired NEA members of the Association, provided that if the number of state directors reaches one hundred fifty (150), the number of directors to which the state units are entitled shall be adjusted to prevent the total from exceeding one hundred fifty (150). The Board of Directors shall adopt rules for implementing this provision.
(No changes to the remainder of the section.)

h. Student [and retired] representation on the Board of Directors shall not be computed in determining the representation entitlements of administrators, classroom teachers in higher education, or Active members employed in educational support positions.

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 50 delegates.)
Contact Person: Ursula Slavick, Maine

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would include NEA-Retired members in state membership totals when the number of representatives on the Board of Directors to which a state is entitled is computed. Seven state affiliates would receive an additional director immediately if the amendment is approved because the added retired members would increase the membership of those affiliates to or beyond the 20,000 threshold that would entitle them to another director. These states are Illinois, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and Utah. Article V, Section 2.d of the Constitution specifies that only Active members may run for these positions. Bylaw 5-1 states that only Active members may vote in the elections for these positions.

Only Active members are now considered in determining the number of directors to which a state affiliate is entitled on the NEA Board of Directors. Article V, Section 1 of the NEA Constitution allocates an additional director beyond the first for each 20,000 Active members of the Association. When the total of state directors reaches 150 under this formula, the number of directors to which each state affiliate is entitled will be adjusted to prevent the total from exceeding 150.

A requirement in Article V, Section 1 of the Constitution that six directors representing Retired members of the Association serve on the Board of Directors was added in 1993, based on a recommendation by the Special Committee on Organizational Streamlining.

The number of state directors on the Board is currently 135. The seven new directors would raise the total to 142, still less than the 150 needed to trigger a change in the representation formula. The average number of Retired members in each of NEA's 53 state affiliates is approximately 3,000.

The second part of this amendment would require that the six directors representing NEA-Retired be included in the total when the computation is performed for the number of directors to which administrators, classroom teachers in higher education, and Active members employed in education support positions are entitled. Article V, Section 1.h of the Constitution currently excludes the six directors who represent NEA-Retired members from the total when this computation is performed.

Article V, Section 1.d-f requires that administrators be represented in proportion to their membership in the Association, that classroom teachers in higher education be represented at least in proportion to their membership in the Association, and that Active members employed in educational support positions be represented at least in proportion to their membership in the Association. If the percentage of members elected to the Board fails to meet the required proportion for each of these membership classifications, the Representative Assembly elects the necessary directors at large.

The addition of the six NEA-Retired directors would further increase the base from 142 to 148. Because the amendment would base the entitlement computations on a higher total number of directors, a greater number of directors from the specified membership classifications could be required to meet the mandated minimums.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT 2

TITLE: To require that members with disabilities comprise at least three percent (3%) of the NEA Board of Directors.

Article V. Board of Directors
Section 1. Composition
c. Members from ethnic minorities shall comprise at least twenty (20) percent of the Board and members with disabilities shall comprise at least three (3) percent of the Board. The Representative Assembly shall elect additional directors as appropriate to assure such representation of ethnic- minorit[y]ies and people with disabilities [representation]. If between meetings of the Representative Assembly representation of ethnic-minorit[y]ies and people with disabilities [representation] on the Board falls below twenty (20) percent and three percent, respectively, the Board shall elect additional directors as appropriate to assure the necessary [ethnic-minority] representation, provided that such an election can be held at a Board meeting prior to the meeting that takes place in connection with the Annual Meeting. Candidates for these positions shall be nominated by members of the Board and chairpersons of caucuses for ethnic- minorit[y]ies and people with disabilities [caucus chairpersons], and any ethnic-minority person or person with disabilities who otherwise is eligible to serve on the Board may be a candidate. The person(s) elected shall serve until an election can be held by the next Representative Assembly in accordance with this section.

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 50 delegates.)
Contact Person: Eric Berg, California

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would create a minimum participation level guarantee of three percent (3%) for NEA members with disabilities on the NEA Board of Directors, similar to the twenty percent (20%) minimum now in effect for ethnic minorities. Steps for maintaining this minimum level when elections of directors at the state affiliate level do not meet the three percent (3%) minimum would be similar to those already in place for ethnic minorities, including the election of one or more at-large directors by the Representative Assembly as needed.

NEA would need to develop a clear definition for "person with disabilities." The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines disabled persons as those meeting one of these criteria:

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity,
- has a record of impairment, or
- is regarded as having an impairment.

Impairments include physical disorders, such as cosmetic disfigurement or loss of a limb, as well as mental and psychological disorders. ADA specifically protects workers with Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS); Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV); cancer; cerebral palsy; diabetes; emotional illness; epilepsy; hearing and speech disorders; heart disorders; learning disabilities such as dyslexia and mental retardation; muscular dystrophy and visual impairments. Recovered alcoholics and former drug addicts are also covered, but not those who are currently abusing. A number of other conditions can be protected under ADA upon proof that they are limiting in some way. To be covered, a person's condition must restrict a life activity, broadly defined as the ability to walk, talk, see, hear, speak, breathe, sit, stand, reach, reason, learn, work or care for himself or herself. ADA does not cover conditions that impose short-term limitations such as pregnancy or broken bones.

A means to assess the disability status of current members of the Board of Directors and candidates for at-large seats on the Board would need to be devised. Significant issues to be addressed would include:

- Whether members seeking seats on the Board of Directors would be permitted to identify themselves as disabled or whether a test or standard would be required to determine eligibility under the proposed language.
- If a Board member designated disabled recovers from the disabling condition, would that member be required to leave the Board?

BYLAW AMENDMENT 2A

TITLE: To provide a method to determine membership dues, allocation of delegate credentials, and affiliation standards for state and local dual-national affiliates.

2-7. Membership Dues
m. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 2-7.n. with regard to members of a dual-national state affiliate, the membership dues of members of a dual-national local affiliate shall be as follows. Members of a dual-national local affiliate shall maintain membership in the Association and the American Federation of Teachers where eligible, and the total combined national dues that such members pay shall be not less than the Association dues for members in the relevant job category. If a member of a dual-national local affiliate is a member of the Association and the American Federation of Teachers, each organization shall receive one-half (1/2) of said member's total combined national dues; if the member is a member of the Association but is not eligible in the American Federation of Teachers, the Association shall receive the full amount of said member's national dues. The provisions of this Bylaw 2-7.m. shall take precedence over anything to the contrary in Bylaw 2-7.a. through f[.], but not in Bylaw 2-7.n.
n. Members of a dual-national state affiliate shall maintain membership in the Association and the American Federation of Teachers where eligible, and the total combined national dues that such members pay shall be not less than the Association dues for members in the relevant job category. If a member of a dual-national state affiliate is a member of the Association and the American Federation of Teachers, said member's total combined dues shall be allocated between the two organizations in a manner that is acceptable to the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Directors; if the member is a member of the Association but is not eligible for membership in the American Federation of Teachers, the Association shall receive the full amount of said member's national dues. The provisions of this Bylaw 2-7.n. shall take precedence over anything to the contrary in Bylaw 2-7.a. through m.

3-1. Allocation of Delegates
a. [Unchanged]
b. [Unchanged]
c. [Unchanged]
d. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 3-1.k., [E]each state affiliate shall be allocated one (1) delegate credential for the first fifty (50) Student members of the Association. The state affiliate shall received a second credential when Student membership in the state reaches seven hundred fifty (750) and an additional credential for each five hundred (500) Student members thereafter. The allocation shall be on the basis of Student membership in the Association as of March 15 of the calendar year in which the Representative Assembly convenes.
e. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 3-1.k., [A]allocation of delegate credentials for Retired members of the Association within each state shall be made to state affiliates based on the ratio of 1:50 for the first 50 Retired members and an additional delegate for each 1,000 Retired members thereafter.
f. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 3-1.k., [A]allocation of delegates to school nurse members denied active membership in local affiliates shall be based on the ratio of 1:150 school nurse members so denied.
g. [Unchanged]
h. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 3-1.k., [A]allocation of delegates to higher education members denied active membership in local affiliates shall be based on the ratio of 1:150 higher education members so denied. The state affiliate shall determine the most appropriate unit for this purpose.
i. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 3-1.k., [A]allocation of delegates to Active members employed in educational support positions who are denied active membership in local affiliates shall be based on the ratio of 1:150 such members so denied.
j. Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 3-1.k., [A]allocation for category 2 delegates in local units

which have all-inclusive membership shall allow for clustering with category 2 members from other local units. In such local units, category 2 members shall not be counted in the allocation for category 1 delegates. Delegates for clustered category 2 members shall be based on the ratio of 1:150. This section shall apply only in those states where the state affiliate has determined that it shall be applicable.

k. The ratios to be used for the allocation of delegate credentials pursuant to Bylaw 3-1.d., e., f., h., i., and j. for members of dual-national local and state affiliates shall be determined by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

8-3. Governance Affiliates

a. [Unchanged]

b. An organization shall not be eligible for Association affiliation as a dual-national local affiliate unless:

1. The organization is from a jurisdiction:

i) which, by operation of law, has been created by combining, in whole or in part, other jurisdictions in which both Association and American Federation of Teachers local affiliates had representational status; or

iii) in which the Association membership and the American Federation of Teachers membership were relatively equal (i.e., neither organization had more than sixty (60) percent of the combined membership); or

iii) in which, during the preceding six (6) years, both the Association local affiliate and the American Federation of Teachers local affiliate had been officially recognized as the employee representative; or

iv) in a state in which there is a dual-national state affiliate; and

[Remainder of Bylaw 8-3.b. unchanged]

c. [Unchanged]

d. An organization shall not be eligible for Association affiliation as a dual-national state affiliate unless it meets the standards established by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

8-11. Standards for State Affiliates

Except as otherwise provided in Bylaw 8-11.i., [T]the Association shall not affiliate a state association unless it meets the following minimum standards:

a. through **h.** [Unchanged]

i. Unless the Executive Committee determines otherwise, and the Board of Directors approves such determination, the Association shall not affiliate a dual-national state affiliate unless it meets the foregoing minimum standards.

12-1. Definitions of Terms

As used in the Charter, the Constitution, these Bylaws, and the Standing Rules, the Association adopts and adheres to the following definitions of terms:

a. State affiliate:

(i) State affiliate shall mean the association within each state or commonwealth and associations representing the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Federal Education Association, and such other comparable associations which meet at least the minimum standards of affiliation; **(ii)** dual-national state affiliate shall mean a state affiliate of the Association that also is a state affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers.

b. through **h.** [Unchanged]

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.c (by majority vote of the NEA Board of Directors) Contact: NEA Board of Directors

IMPACT STATEMENT

It is anticipated that the NEA Board of Directors will approve guidelines to deal with the question of mergers between NEA and AFT state affiliates at its April 30/May 1, 1999 meeting. Under Article IX, Section 3, of the NEA Constitution, proposed amendments to the Bylaws "shall be presented in writing to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules, postmarked no later than one hundred twenty (120) days preceding the Annual Meeting." The deadline date for the presentation of amendments to the Bylaws to be acted on at the 1999 Annual Meeting is March 3, 1999. Since it was known prior to March 3, 1999, whether and to what extent Bylaw amendments will be necessary in connection with the merger guidelines approved by the Board of Directors, the purpose of these Bylaw amendments is to provide maximum flexibility to the Board in the developmental process, and to keep open all of the Board's options.

These Bylaw amendments provide a definition for the term "dual-national state affiliate." They give the Executive Committee discretion, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, to (1) authorize special arrangements dealing with the membership dues and governance rights of members of dual-national state affiliates, and (2) establish special standards for the affiliation of dual-national state affiliates. It is the intention of the Board of Directors to review the Bylaw amendments at its April 30/May 1, 1999 meeting, and request that they be withdrawn and/or seek to have them amended at the 1999 Annual Meeting as necessary in light of the merger guidelines that are approved.

A Bylaw amendment that has been introduced may be withdrawn "when approved by the Representative Assembly" (NEA Constitution, Article IX, Section 5), or may be amended "at the Annual Meeting by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting" (NEA Constitution, Article IX, Section 3(c)). The type of amendment that is allowed at the Annual Meeting is controlled by *Robert's Rules of Order*, and under *Robert's* the Bylaw amendment that originally was introduced only can be amended "downward." The concept of amending downward may be explained by envisioning a continuum. At one end of the continuum is the status quo as reflected in the existing Bylaw; at the other end of the continuum is the situation that would exist under the Bylaw amendment that was originally introduced. Any change in the original Bylaw amendment that moves down the continuum closer to the status quo is an allowable downward amendment. The approach taken in most of these Bylaw amendments — i.e., giving the Executive Committee discretion to deal with the matter in question, subject to approval by the Board of Directors — extends the continuum extraordinarily far. Because the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors conceivably could authorize any type of arrangement, virtually any specific provision would be a downward amendment.

BYLAW AMENDMENT 3

TITLE: To designate as *Seat 1* and *Seat 2* the two vacancies on the NEA Executive Committee filled through election at the Representative Assembly each year and to require that candidates specify which seat they are running for.

Bylaw 6. Executive Committee
6-1. Election

a. The Executive Committee shall consist of nine (9) members: President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and six (6) members elected at large by the Representative Assembly. Two (2) of the six (6) at-large members shall be elected each year. The two (2) at-large positions each year shall be designated as Seat 1 and Seat 2. Prospective candidates shall certify to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules whether they are running for *Seat 1* or *Seat 2*.

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 50 delegates.) Contact Person: Bill Dorsey, Ohio

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would require that by April 15, a candidate for one of the two at-large seats on the Executive Committee that will be filled at the Representative Assembly declare for either Seat 1 or Seat 2. The information about which candidates have filed for which seat would be public.

NEA conducts annual elections for Executive Committee at the Representative Assembly. In any given year, two at-large members of the Executive Committee are elected. Elections such as these, where more than one seat is open in a single race, can be termed "multiseat" elections.

Bullet voting is possible in multiseat elections because a voter can cast less than the number of votes to which he or she is entitled. Thus, rather than vote for two candidates in an election to fill two open seats on the Executive Committee, a voter who bullet votes would cast only one vote. Only the single vote would be counted. This gives an advantage to the chosen candidate and reduces the number of votes received by the candidate's opponents. This amendment would eliminate "bullet voting" in Executive Committee elections. While bullet voting does allow for strategic decisions among voters about how to distribute their votes, it is not ruled out by law and is a generally-approved voting practice. Designating seats as described in the amendment is also approved by law and is a generally-approved voting practice.

The 1998 Representative Assembly defeated an identical amendment.

BYLAW AMENDMENT 4

TITLE: To require that NEA trusteeships of affiliates are confirmed by the members of the affiliate in question.

Bylaw 8. Affiliates and Special Interest Groups
8-12. Trusteeships Over State Affiliates

(new) **e.** Within ninety (90) days of imposition of trusteeship, there will be a mail ballot of the state affiliate members, paid for by NEA, to approve or reject the trusteeship. The opponents of the trusteeship, which may include removed officers, shall be provided opportunities to engage in a campaign in support of their positions with access to member meetings, mailings, and other forums.

If the trusteeship is rejected by a majority of those participating, the NEA shall be bound by the members' vote and shall cease further actions by returning control of the state association to the previous elected/appointed officials. If the trusteeship is approved, NEA may proceed with the trusteeship process.

(Subsequent paragraphs are re-lettered.)

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 50 delegates.) Contact Person: Frank Olbris, Massachusetts

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would make continuation of a trusteeship over a state affiliate by NEA subject to a vote of confirmation by the members of the state affiliate in question. Upon recommendation of the Special Committee on Organizational Streamlining, the Bylaws were amended in 1993 to grant NEA the ability to establish trusteeships over state affiliates. A trusteeship is the assumption by NEA of jurisdiction over the operations of a state affiliate. To date, no trusteeships have been proposed or considered.

NEA may establish a trusteeship at the recommendation of two-thirds of the NEA Executive Committee (Bylaw 8-12.a and b) and subject to approval by two-thirds of the Board of Directors for the purpose of "(i) correcting corruption or financial malpractice or (ii) restoring democratic procedures." Bylaw 8-12.h allows a state affiliate to appeal to the Representative Assembly a decision by the Board of Directors to establish a trusteeship or a refusal by the Board to terminate a trusteeship.

The amendment would supplement rather than supplant current appeal provisions. It would therefore be possible, depending on the timing of NEA's imposition of a trusteeship, for a state affiliate to simultaneously appeal the trusteeship decision to the Representative Assembly and make imposition of the trusteeship subject to a vote of the state membership.

The amendment is unclear about the process used to identify "opponents of the trusteeship" and about what "opportunities" should be provided to these opponents to campaign for their positions. The extent of NEA's financial obligation to provide "opportunities to engage in a campaign" is open to interpretation.

Depending on the size of the state membership, a mail ballot of state affiliate members would result in a major expense to NEA. Additional expense would be incurred by providing access to member mailings, meetings, etc. to opponents of the trusteeship.

BYLAW AMENDMENT 5

TITLE: To allow members to designate where the political contribution portion of their dues money is allocated.

Bylaw 11. General Finance
11-9. Budget

(new) **f.** All members shall be given the opportunity to designate where the political contribution portion of their dues money is to be allocated.

Submitted in accordance with Standing Rule 9.D.1.a (by petition of at least 50 delegates.) Contact Person: Ed Weber, Ohio

IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules interprets "political contribution" to mean contributions to candidates for elective office. Since no dues money is used for that purpose, the amendment is out of order. Such contributions are made to the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (formerly NEA-PAC).

Deletions are in brackets, additions are underlined. Further information may be obtained from the NEA Governance and Policy Office, 1201 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (telephone 202/822-7328).

Candidates Running for NEA Office

Bob Chase
Candidate for NEA President

As public education employees, we must face the truth. America is becoming a nation of haves and have-nots when it comes to education. There aRe excellent schools in America where children are given every opportunity for a bright future. However, many of us know of schools with needs so great that teaching is at risk, and the true tragedy is that too many people are willing to abandon children to those circumstances. We can not allow this to continue. NEA must continue in its traditional role of employee advocacy, but it must also, with equal vigor, champion the needs of schools and children who are in need of hope. No child, parent, or NEA member deserves less.

Reg Weaver
Candidate for NEA Vice President

Using new unionism as an organizational vehicle, we have traveled in a direction that enhances the achievement of excellence and equity in public education. By continuing to utilize advocacy processes to expand the rights and interests of the education profession, and by continuing to assist our members to grow professionally, we can create a healthy education environment and reshape the public debate over education reform.

While we have resources to be leaders in restoring the public's confidence in public education, we cannot prevail alone. We must use the influence other groups bring as allies in our efforts to provide the best possible education for our children. Together we can meet the challenges of today and manage the opportunities of tomorrow.

Eddie Davis
Candidate for NEA Executive Committee

For well over a century, public education has been one of America's most cherished institutions. It has served as the vehicle for common people to travel to the destinations of their dreams and aspirations. Even with the flaws of the past, including segregation, access to quality education has been, and still is, the most democratic and most valued component of our society.

To ensure that 21st century opponents are not successful in their attempts to dismantle public education, NEA members must stand tall for high student achievement, quality school personnel, non-disruptive schools, and effective practices. NEA members build a bridge between schools and their communities. This bridge must connect students to their futures.

With creativity and concentration, the NEA and its allies can guarantee the preservation and advancement of our beloved institution of public education.

Lily Eskelsen
Candidate for NEA Executive Committee

Our Association needs leaders who know how to work as a team, who know how to build coalitions and who are willing to listen as well as speak up. At the same time, we must never shy away from a fight when it's necessary to protect our members and the families we serve.

We stand for something worth working for. Worth fighting for. We are the Education Family committed to respect for all our members, to quality education for all our students, and to the cause of public education. A good school is the key to every hope we have in a better future for ourselves, our children, and our country.

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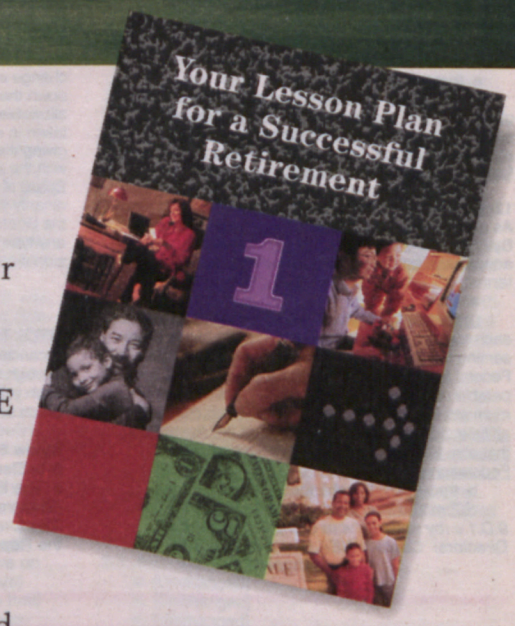

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VBNT0599

In the Light Lane

A Tale of Two Cities

Two of my fifth graders were looking at a map of the United States and discussing the different states and cities.

One of the boys said, "How come there are two Washingtons?"

The second boy replied, "There's a Washington, D.C., and a Washington, A.C."

Rebecca Hadley-Schlosser
Honolulu, Hawaii

One of our kindergarten teachers was walking to the lunchroom with her students. One of her little girls asked her, "Do you work?"

The teacher smiled and said, "Yes."

The little girl looked up at her and asked, "Where?"

Michelle Brown
Lynn Haven, Florida

One day I took the students in my English For Speakers of Other Languages class to the school media center. I told the small class to take a table by the window. The boys then went in the other direction from the window.

The next thing I heard was, "Where do you want us to put it? There isn't much room over there."

Four of my charming seventh graders were ready to lift the table near the door and take it to the window. Such good listening and cooperation!

Margaret Golibersuch
Columbia, Maryland

Some of my fourth graders who failed a map test were retaking the exam during recess.

I noticed one girl, who was retaking the test, seemed to be getting some help from her neighbor who had passed. I came over and told him not to give her the answers.

He looked at me, aghast, and said, "But, Ms. Brown, I wasn't giving her the right answers. That would have been cheating."

Jenny Brown
Oak Harbor, Washington

One of my all-time favorite questions was when an elementary student asked me, "Which version of Tom Sawyer is best? The one by Samuel Clemens or the one by Mark Twain?"

Sandra L. Doggett
Ijamsville, Maryland

The gap between the generations became very evident the other day when I brought an old Jackson Browne album to play for my students during a poetry lesson.

As I took out the album and put it on my old stereo, a student said, "Mrs. Wangberg, that's the biggest CD I've ever seen!"

Lynn Wangberg
Minneapolis, Minnesota

I presented a class of mentally handicapped students with a series of problems to see if they could come up with solutions.

I told them that the previous evening, I sat down to eat dinner, but a fly kept buzzing by my head and landing on my food.

I asked one little guy what I should do. Very matter of factly, he said, "Buy a frog."

Nancy Schlup
Newton, Kansas

We were discussing new vocabulary words in my fifth grade class. The new word was "prosperity." I asked the children what things a person might have if they had prosperity. The usual answers followed: mansions, yachts, and fancy cars.

Emily raised her hand. Her answer was "Hopefully, me!"

Kathy Bottone
Brick, New Jersey

My class was lined up at the door ready to go home. While waiting for the bell to ring, I told them we needed to relax and calm down. One way to do that, I said, was to take some deep breaths.

I led them by saying "inhale" and then "exhale."

We had done this about three times when, from the middle of the line, Jonathon said, "In-Heaven, ex-Heaven!"

I guess our Texas accent caused him to misunderstand what I was saying.

Pat Bitner
Big Lake, Texas

"I prefer to think of it as being held over due to popular demand instead of staying after school."

My third grade class was working on proper nouns. They were asked to write down the name of a river. One student wrote Mrs. Sippy.

Tina Schneider
Baltic, South Dakota

During an art history lesson with my second graders, I wrote on the chalkboard an artist's name, and her birth and death years (1844-1926).

As I started to discuss her paintings, one student waved his hand wildly in the air and asked, "If she's dead, why do you have her phone number on the board?"

Heidi Hamer
Geneseo, Illinois

During a recent "100th Day of School" celebration, one child asked, "What do we get on the 3,000th day of school?"

Without skipping a beat, my class comedian replied. "A job!"

Kimberley Kelly
Corn, Oklahoma

In the writing portion of our Reading Recovery lesson, I referred many times to the silent 'e' at the end of the word. After a few examples of this, a student innocently asked, "Why can only teachers hear the silent letters?"

Linda Kuhaupt
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Math 101

I often ask students a "brain teaser" before they leave the media center. One day, as a second grade class was leaving, I asked, "How many feet in a yard?"

A delightful child eagerly raised his hand and said, "Actually, Mrs. Irwin, it depends on how many people are standing in it."

Sandy Irwin
Minneapolis, Minnesota

One of my highly gifted preschoolers was being evaluated by the school psychologist.

The psychologist asked, "If you had 12 bananas and you gave half of them away, how many would you have left?"

This child planted his chin on his hand and said, "Actually you would have the same number. They would just be shorter."

Nancy Lee Schaefer
Anchorage, Alaska

A first grader asked me how old I was (I was 60 at the time). I asked her how old she thought I was. She said 14.

I explained that 14-year-olds were just starting high school.

"Oh," she said, "then you must be 70."

John Wright
Hadley, Massachusetts

My fourth grade students' jaws dropped as Romeo and Juliet kissed during a school assembly. Later, one student said, "They must have smooched 21 times because they rehearsed for three weeks." One boy said, "No, it was 21 plus four because they gave the play four times this week!"

Lora Krouse
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Got Laughs?

■ Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share with other NEA members? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane," *NEA Today,* 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Fax: 202/822-7206. Send E-mail to neatoday@nea.org.

■ Want a classroom chuckle delivered to your E-mail box once a week? Subscribe to the new "In the Light Lane" mailing list. Just send an E-mail to **join-lightlane@list.nea.org** (no subject or message needed).

People

Photos by Rachelle Omenson

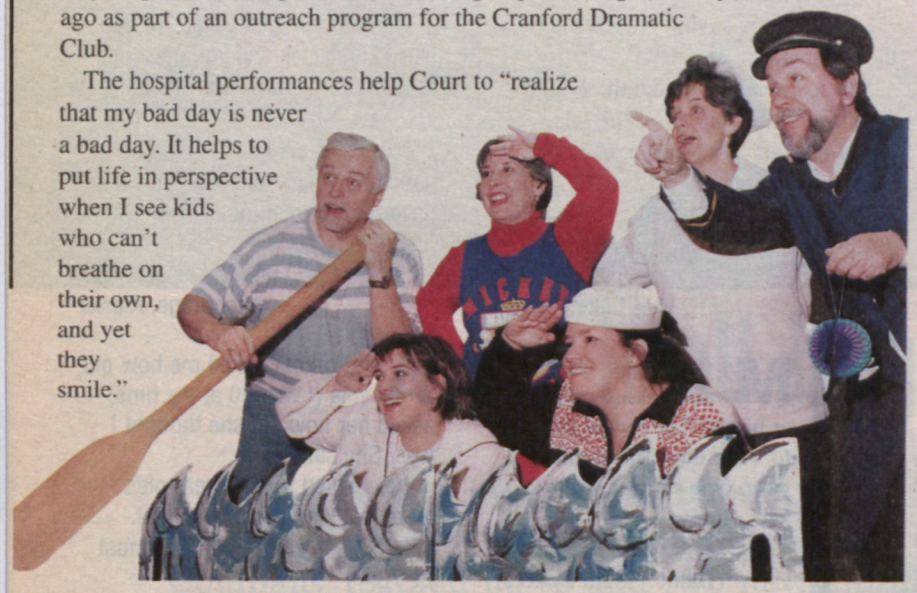
And Yet They **Smile**

You may think, **Marilyn Court**, a 29-year veteran teacher at Polk Elementary in Roselle, New Jersey, has seen enough kids over the course of her years in the classroom. But Court is still looking for opportunities to see even more. Twice a year, Court and a variety group she formed with some teaching colleagues perform at area hospitals for kids who are long-term patients.

"I remember a three-year-old boy who was covered in a body suit after having been severely burned," Court says. "But he was clapping to the music and had a smile on his face."

For the young trauma patients, Court, a member of the Roselle Education Association, and her cast pick a theme, dress up in costumes, and use props while they sing, dance, and perform skits. The group came together 10 years ago as part of an outreach program for the Cranford Dramatic Club.

The hospital performances help Court to "realize that my bad day is never a bad day. It helps to put life in perspective when I see kids who can't breathe on their own, and yet they smile."



Lessons with **Leggz**

Marian Lacey likes to put her best leg forward when teaching her kindergartners. That's because she wears her lessons on her legs.

For the past 16 years, Lacey, an NEA member and a teacher at Northeast Bradford Elementary in Rome, Pennsylvania, has collected more than 320 pairs of patterned stockings. She pairs lesson plans with stockings—iguanas in a rain forest for a science lesson, animals for a zoo lesson, license plates for a transportation lesson.

"The kids always look at my legs to see what today's lesson will be," says Lacey, nicknamed Leggz.

The parents enjoy it too. Instead of asking their children, "What did Mrs. Lacey teach today?" they ask, "What

ESP of the **Year**

Gail Rasmussen, a local leader in the fight to keep kids in school and an Association and community activist, has been named the 1999 NEA Support Person of the Year.

"It's amazing to me how many hats she can wear at once and still meet each responsibility with the same level of fervor and attention so that nothing is neglected," says Anna Diehl, chief of community resource development at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

In her day job, Rasmussen works as an attendance coordinator and community liaison at Eagle Point High School in Oregon. At the cutting edge of her field, Rasmussen uses a device called PhoneMaster to contact the family of any child who is absent for any period of time. She then works with truant students and their families to find ways to boost attendance.

Outside of work, Rasmussen has held several Association offices on the local, state, and national levels, from local president to member of NEA's Board of Directors.

A dozen years ago, Rasmussen helped organize support employees at Eagle Point, then helped bring the NEA locals representing teachers and support staff in Eagle Point together. With 353 members, the new local is now the largest ESP-teacher merged unit west of the Mississippi.

In her spare time, Rasmussen volunteers at the Veterans Administration Domiciliary, the American Red Cross, the athletic booster club, and the Start Making A Reader Today (SMART) program, where she regularly gives up her lunch break to read at a local elementary school.

"Gail's high energy and enthusiasm is contagious," says Eagle Point Mayor David McFall. "She frequently goes above and beyond the beacon call to solve problems."

Dean Guernsey

Beth Kaplan

did Mrs. Lacey have on her legs today?"

The idea came from Lacey's father. She had always worn patterned and colored hose, so it wasn't out of the ordinary for her father to suggest the designed stockings for her class.

Lacey buys most of her tights while traveling overseas or to large cities. She reports the most success in England and various airport shops. If a friend is traveling abroad, Lacey is sure to place her order.

"I wear them everyday," Lacey says. "You never see me without stockings."

At Home in the **Woods**

When the chartered bus full of homeless children from Atlanta pulls up to Camp Kanuga in Hendersonville, North Carolina, NEA member **Dean Chandler** and his staff are ready for five days of fun.

Every July for the past nine years, Chandler, a counselor at Woodland Middle School in East Point, Georgia, has headed up to the mountains to offer about 90 hard-luck city kids a chance to exchange cement walls for mountain scenery and homelessness for a place in the woods they can call home.

The camp's a dozen years old, and it's the brainchild of an Atlanta group called Kanuga Conferences, Inc. It's funded by several Atlanta churches, the Rotary Club, individuals, and even NEA members.

When Chandler was asked to help out, he jumped in with both feet.

"Not only does Dean have a good way with children," says Albert Gooch, director of Camp Kanuga, "he does a great job of molding the staff into one organized, effective camp staff in less than 24 hours."

Chandler takes the kids—ages 9 to 14—swimming, hiking, canoeing, and then gives them a night of sleeping under the stars.

"My goal never changes," Chandler says. "I want these kids to have a summer of fun, safety, and excitement."

If you'd like to make a contribution to the camp, please send a check made out to Kanuga Conferences, to Camp Kanuga, P.O. Box 250, Hendersonville, NC 28739. Please mark "Camp Kanuga, Session Six" on the check or call 828/692-9136 for details.

Laura Noel

Jennifer Geesey

Flying **High**

What do the Wright brothers and **Pat Schultheis's** students have in common? They both set records in the field of aviation.

The Wright brothers were the *first*, but the students at Haverhill Elementary School are the *youngest* in history to build an airplane that can carry a person.

Schultheis, a retired physical education teacher from Portage, Michigan, set his sights high for his students—1,400 feet high to be exact. Schultheis knew he and his students would make history on April 1, 1998, when he successfully soared in the 17-foot long, 250-pound Phantom X1 ultralight aircraft his students built.

On that day, the students listened intently to the school's PA system, as Schultheis's live account of the flight via cell phone was broadcast. "It was really exciting," Schultheis says. "The kids went nuts."

A contest was held to determine a color and wing-pattern design for the plane. More than 350 kids at the school submitted ideas. The top choice was selected by a committee of 20 students.

The plane, better known as "Child's Play," was assembled four times in five months, a move that enabled all 130 interested students to have an opportunity to participate.

Schultheis, who has been flying ultralight planes for 16 years, supervised the kids before and after school and during recess, so that the project wouldn't interfere with class time.

"The kids were very disciplined," Schultheis says. "If I was late in the morning, the students were there waiting for me, ready to get to work."

The plane has won two national aviation awards. Schultheis is now trying to get other schools involved in similar projects. If you're interested, call Schultheis at 616/375-0505 or Fax him at 616/375-0551.

Money

Getting Started

What is a junk bond?

Let's start with a bond. A bond is an investment that gives you income at a specified rate and then returns your principal at a specified time. It's similar to a bank loan—except you are the bank.

The borrower promises to pay you a set rate of interest—and agrees to repay the principal at a specified time. Your concerns as a bond investor are the same as those of the bank that loans you money. The first is the ability or willingness of the issuer to repay the money.

Bonds are assigned letter grades that indicate the creditworthiness of the borrower as measured by Moody's Investor Service and the Standard & Poor's Corporation. The top rating goes to the U.S. government, then come corporations with an AAA rating, and on down to those classified as NR because they have no rating.

The higher the credit rating, the lower the risk for the investor, but the higher the credit rating, the lower the interest rate the investor gets.

Junk bonds, or "high-yield bonds" as they are often called, are bonds that have a low credit rating or no rating at all. Junk bonds are appealing because they pay a higher rate of interest. But junk bonds are risky because a borrower may default, and then you won't get your money back.

Like most investments, junk bonds require that you weigh the trade-off between risk and return.

Did You Know?

That you can get the current rates for the NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account and the NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate® CD on the NEA Member Benefits Web site?

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Along with the current interest rates, you'll find the latest specials from the NEA Car Rental Service. You can also download free Member Education Guides on a variety of topics. Log on today at www. neamb.com for information on how to get more out of life.

Can You Afford . . . ?

Baby Dollars and Sense

The high cost of raising kids.

Can you afford to have a baby? That's a loaded question. I have two children aged 9 and 13. My husband and I certainly didn't get out our calculators when we were planning to have them.

So let's agree that children cost a lot of money, and that there is never really the perfect time to have a child.

Yet we go ahead and have children anyway for all the pleasures and challenges and wonder and opportunities and growth they bring to our lives.

That said, there is a good reason to focus on the financial responsibilities in advance because taking this step can help prepare you for the transition to parenthood.

For those who like numbers, there are plenty available. The U.S. Department of Agriculture surveys 5,000 households four times a year to find out how much money these Americans spend to raise their children.

Those who earn more than $60,000 spend about $223,860 to raise a child to age 17. These figures are based on a dual-parent family with two children. Couples with just one child spend more, those with more children spend less per child.

The College Board puts the cost of four years of private college at around $85,000 in today's dollars. A public college is around $45,000.

The costs seem staggering, yet many parents say they are seriously understated. Consider, for example, that the survey found that child care and education cost $1,671 per year for a young child. This would include day care, summer camps, and so forth.

In truth, child care in a large city can run to $20,000 per year. But half the families in the survey reported no child care or education costs, according to Janet Bamford, one reporter who dug into the numbers.

But if you are a young person contemplating your first child, put first things first. Get health care in place. Figure out who will take care of the baby. Also think about how having a baby will impact your earning power. Should one spouse cut back or work part time?

The Web offers lots of helpful material in this area, including a calculator to help determine what you gain—and lose—with a second income. Go to www.moneycentral.com, then into the family area, where you'll find the calculator as well as articles on the cost of raising children.

Check, too, at www.kiplingers.com, where you'll find a child-cost calculator that allows you to plug in your own numbers. Also on this site is one of my favorite columnists on kids and money, Dr. Tightwad, a.k.a. Janet Bodnar.

—Mary Rowland

Dual-Parent Family — Before-Tax Income: $35,567 to $59,756

Age of Child	Housing	Food	Transportation	Clothing	Health	Child care/ Education	Misc.	TOTAL
0 to 2	3,003	984	1,107	451	523	1,107	882	8,057
3 to 5	2,973	1,138	1,076	441	502	1,230	902	8,262
6 to 8	2,901	1,456	1,199	482	574	789	933	8,333
9 to 11	2,898	1,712	1,271	533	615	513	964	8,303
12 to 14	2,911	1,722	1,384	82	825	379	1,128	8,231
15 to 17	2,501	1,917	1,753	800	656	646	912	9,184
Total	50,963	26,783	23,370	10,824	10,486	13,991	17,159	163,566

The data is based on a family with two children on a per-child basis. So a family of two would then double the total cost. Thus a family with an annual income of less than $35,566 could expect to spend somewhere around $225,582 for two children by the time they each had reached age 18. For a family with only one child, the USDA recommends that you multiply the figures by 1.24. It assumes that families with only one child spend more on a per-capita basis. So that same family with an income of less than $35,566 would spend $139,860.84. If you have three or more children, the USDA assumes you'll spend slightly less per child. You should multiply each of the figures by 0.77. So, from our example above, a family with three children would spend $260,547 ($112,791 x 0.77 x 3). Source: MSN MoneyCentral

Resources

Your decision to start a family may not depend solely on your bank account, but it always helps to have a little something tucked away.

Years ago, a regular passbook savings account may have been enough. Not today. We have other options available now that pay more interest yet keep our funds accessible.

One example: the NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account. With above average interest rates that are adjusted weekly, the NEA money market account offers the security of FDIC insurance (up to $100,000 per account), with the flexibility of easy access to your funds.

This account carries no penalty or advance notice for withdrawal. And interest is compounded daily.

For more information on how to open an account or current rates, call NEA Financial Services, toll-free, at 800/348-4632.

Making College Affordable

With college costs rising faster than the rate of inflation, planning and saving are crucial.

Who:
NEA-member Linda Rains, a remediation resource teacher at Belleview-Santos Elementary School in Belleview, Florida

Financial Goal:
To finance a college education for each of her children

Game Plan:
Rains, who resides in Ocala, with her husband and three of their five children, has a daughter who graduated from Florida A&M University and a son who is currently attending Tusculum University in Greenville, Tennessee. Financing their education hasn't been easy. It's required a combination of student loans, grants, scholarships, and personal savings.

"My daughter received a grant from a sorority, and my son was lucky enough to receive a football scholarship," says Rains. "They also got some federal Pell Grant money and qualified for Stafford student loans."

The balance came out-of-pocket.

"In my daughter's case, the expenses were higher than we expected," says Rains, "since she lived in an apartment off-campus instead of a dorm, and then went on to pursue a second degree from Florida State."

Rains's third child is currently attending a junior college, which is being paid for entirely out-of-pocket.

"You really have to prepare," notes Rains. "I guess we didn't prepare enough. If we had, we'd be in much better shape."

The Experts Say:
When it comes to your child's college education, the most important thing you can do is start saving now. What follows is a rundown on ways to save and pay for college:

■ **Mutual Funds**. One of the easiest ways to save is to make automatic monthly or quarterly contributions to a mutual fund. Mutual fund investing has two main advantages: professional money management and diversification. If your children are young, consider investing in growth stock funds until your child reaches about age 14. Then, each year, move one year's tuition into less risky investments, such as money market funds, bond funds, or certificates of deposit.

■ **Prepaid Tuition Programs**. Forty-two states have prepaid tuition programs, which allow you to prepay tomorrow's tuition at today's rates. This approach protects you from excessive tuition hikes, but it doesn't cover room and board, and it may reduce your child's eligibility for financial aid.

■ **Education IRA**. The new Education IRA is another way to save for your child's education. You can make annual contributions of up to $500. These contributions aren't tax-deductible, but earnings grow tax-deferred and qualified withdrawals can be taken free.

■ **Roth IRA**. The new Roth IRA could become the budding scholar's best friend. In fact, if you have a retirement savings plan such as a 403(b), the Roth IRA may be better for educational purposes than the Education IRA.

Here's why: The Education IRA limits your contributions to $500 a year. Earnings are tax-free if used for college expenses, but the IRS will penalize you if you haven't used the money for educational purposes by the time your beneficiary turns 30.

By contrast, the Roth IRA has fewer limitations. You can contribute up to $2,000 a year, and you can withdraw your contributions (but not your earnings) at any time for any purpose without penalties or taxes.

■ **Uniform Gifts to Minors' Accounts**: Grandparents often attempt to offset the cost of college by opening a UGMA in a grandchild's name. There's a tax break on money contributed, but the account may actually reduce your child's eligibility for financial aid, because a greater portion of a child's savings is expected to be applied to tuition than parents' savings.

Don Frazier

The Rains family, from left: Malcolm, Camille, Raymond, Linda, and Devon in their Ocala, Florida home.

Resources

Is it too late to start saving for college? The answer is no! You can use the NEA Valuebuilder® Mutual Fund Program to save for college expenses and make your withdrawals penalty-free.

By using the NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund Program to invest in a Roth Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can contribute up to $2,000* a year. You can withdraw principal and interest from a Roth IRA before age 59½ to pay for higher education and pay no penalties or taxes. By using the NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund Program, you'll have access to your money when you need it. And you'll get personalized service through your NEA Valuebuilder Financial Service Representative. So call NEA's MBC Investor Services toll-free at 800/637-4636 to find out how you can get started saving for your child's future.

*Contributions to the Roth IRA are not tax deductible, but withdrawals under the specified guidelines are tax free.

Continuing On

I'm confused about my options for saving for retirement, especially tax deferred investments?

Individuals have several options for saving for retirement, ranging from tax-deferred annuities and mutual funds to stocks, bonds, and cash-value life insurance policies.

Several factors should affect your selection, including cost (fees and expenses), annual performance, and the level of service.

Tax-deferred annuities may have higher costs than mutual funds and investing in individual stocks and bonds, but will provide a higher level of service, including investment advice. The annual performance of tax-deferred annuities and mutual funds are closely related.

NEA members usually have two options for saving money on a tax-advantaged basis: tax-deferred annuity 403(b)s and qualified mutual fund 403(b)(7)s.

Both these options allow education employees to have their employers pay part of their income into an account, before calculating income tax on the balance of their income.

Money in a 403(b) account is considered "tax-deferred" until it's withdrawn, usually after retirement.

For comparative information about mutual funds, tax deferred annuities, and qualified mutual funds, check out the NEA Member Benefits Web site at www.neamb.com. Or you can request a copy of the November 1998 Member Benefits Financial Awareness Bulletin by calling 800/637-4636.

Retiring Soon?

Thinking about retirement? Don't forget that membership in NEA-Retired offers you a continuation of Association activism, benefits tailored to your needs as a retiree, plus workshops, conferences, and volunteer opportunities.

You'll also receive *NEA Retired* magazine, a bimonthly publication covering Association news and the latest on Social Security, pension, and health issues—as well as feature articles on NEA-Retired members around the country.

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My Turn

Facing Down False Accusations

One student, one accusation, and a teacher's life is changed forever.

By Michael Gallagher

When I answered the door that cold, dismal morning in December, I faced two detectives from the police department.

"Are you Michael Gallagher?" one asked.

"Yes."

"Someone's filed a complaint against you, and we want you to come to the station with us."

Confused and dazed, I asked if I should call a lawyer.

"No," they said, so I didn't. That was my first big mistake.

At the station, my wife and I were put in separate rooms. Both of us were questioned.

I was told that a student I taught 12 years ago accused me of sexually molesting her, raping her 20 times.

I was flabbergasted! Who would make such an accusation?

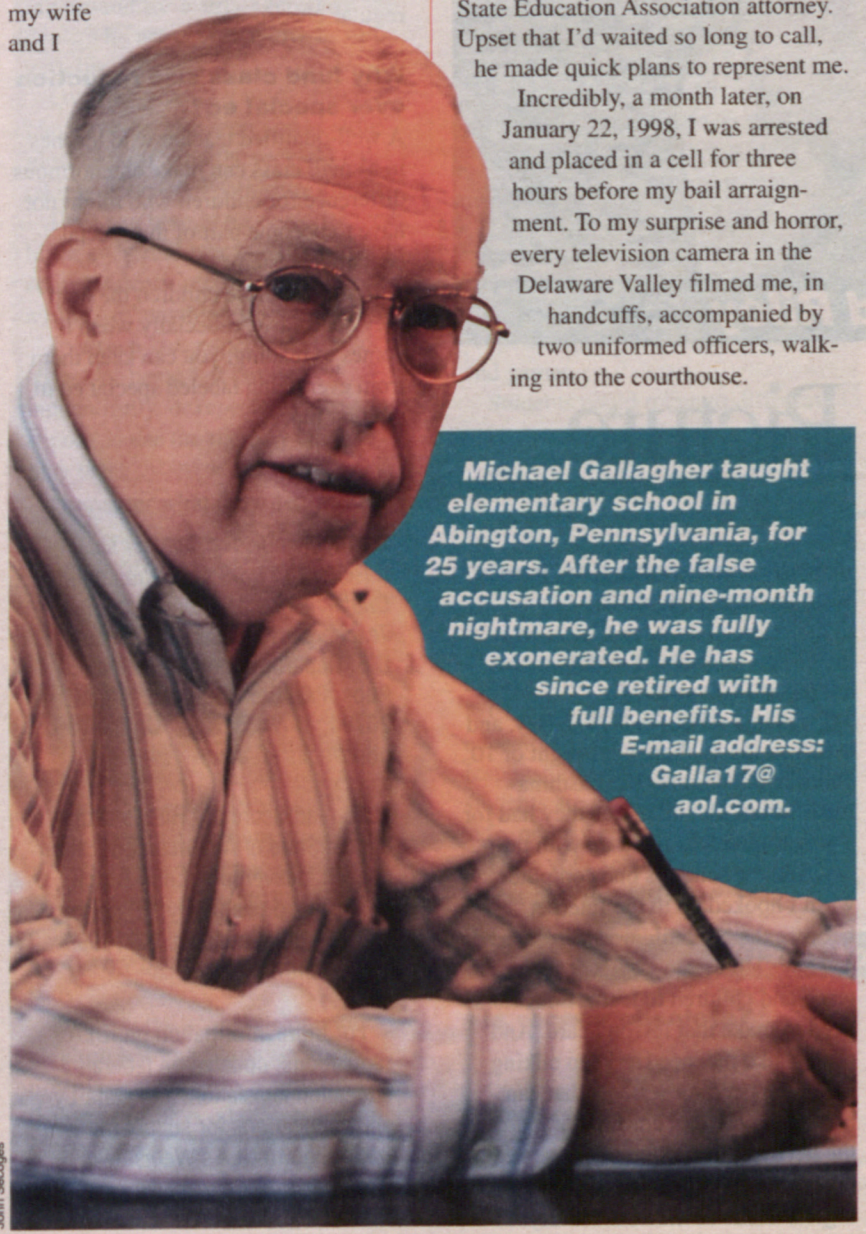
The police named a girl in my fifth grade class in 1985. I couldn't really place her. That had been a good class, and only a few students stood out.

I've taught more than 800 students in my 25 years in the classroom. Why had this one made such a false accusation about me? I went into teaching to help children, not harm them.

I answered the detectives' questions, permitted them to search my house, and even took a polygraph. These were all big mistakes on my part.

When I was released after seven grueling hours, I finally used my common sense and called my Pennsylvania State Education Association attorney. Upset that I'd waited so long to call, he made quick plans to represent me.

Incredibly, a month later, on January 22, 1998, I was arrested and placed in a cell for three hours before my bail arraignment. To my surprise and horror, every television camera in the Delaware Valley filmed me, in handcuffs, accompanied by two uniformed officers, walking into the courthouse.



John Secoges

Michael Gallagher taught elementary school in Abington, Pennsylvania, for 25 years. After the false accusation and nine-month nightmare, he was fully exonerated. He has since retired with full benefits. His E-mail address: Galla17@aol.com.

With little formality, the judge set a preliminary hearing date and bail, and I was released on my own recognizance—with one condition. I could have no contact with children whatsoever. Here I was, a well-respected teacher and a law-abiding citizen, being treated as a pedophile!

The school board suspended me immediately without pay. I then began the longest journey of my life, aided by the unending support of my entire family, district teachers, and friends.

Phyllis "Honey" Pertnoy, my local Association president, wouldn't rest until I was proven innocent.

She raised much-needed money, spoke in my defense all over the country, and pledged to be a character witness. It made me proud to be an NEA member.

While waiting for trial, the state attempted to remove my teaching certification. The notice stated that an indictment or arrest was, in effect, as good as a conviction.

What few rights teachers really have, I thought. How much we need our Association to fight for us.

Finally, in October, an assistant district attorney, at our urging, questioned my accuser again. The young woman contradicted her earlier testimony and failed a polygraph test. She had lied about everything.

A few days later, at a news conference, the district attorney's office announced my total exoneration. The media—from local newspapers to *Dateline NBC*—picked up the story.

Could such a tragedy happen to you? I'm hearing from people all over the country who, just like me, have been falsely accused.

If you are ever accused, heaven forbid, please learn from my mistakes.

- If accused by any law enforcement officer, never talk without an attorney. Don't feel compelled to discuss your innocence.
- If you are not under arrest, don't go with the police—your attorney can make these arrangements.
- Talk with no one about the accusation except your attorney and immediate family members.
- Be wary of any law enforcement agency. Most are ethical, some are not.
- Always remember, there's a tendency for administrators and police to believe the accuser, not you.
- Above all, be cautious. I wasn't.

You Said It

Bill Fischer, editor

Most of the work NEA members do doesn't make headlines, but it does make a difference. I ran across two stories recently that once again drove this point home to me.

The first involves NEA member Carol Ann Drane from Mississippi. Five years ago, Drane, a 20-year teaching veteran, saw a need in her Canton area and moved to fill it.

Canton High had several hundred kids who needed help preparing themselves for workplace success. These students didn't really know what they wanted to do—and Drane didn't know all the possibilities open to them. So she set out to remedy that situation.

To learn firsthand about the skills and training her students needed, Drane started working for local businesses during the summer months. Last year, state vocational ed officials named Drane's career center program the state's Support Program of the Year.

Across the country, in California, NEA member Marcia Blum is making a difference, too. Blum, a chef and pastry maker in the San Francisco area, created a cafe program to teach her students vocational skills.

Blum came across an unused kitchen in a local school district office in Mt. Diablo. With district help, Blum turned the defunct kitchen into a working/teaching operation.

Each Thursday, seven students with severe disabilities, ages 18-22, prepare home-cooked meals for the district staff. Students prepare an entree, baked potatoes, soup, sandwiches, and pastries under Blum's supervision. The students learn important skills and go on to vocational programs or to regular jobs.

Says Blum: "My first love is teaching, but I've been able to incorporate other things I love into my work."

If you have a story to share, an idea that really works, don't keep it to yourself. We're now planning stories for next year's editions of *NEA Today*, and we welcome your ideas. Send them directly to me online at NEAToday@nea.org.

Bill Fischer

Meet

He's been U.S. secretary of education for six years. What's on his agenda today?

In February, Richard Riley gave his sixth annual State of American Education speech at California State University in Long Beach. His remarks spanned many topics—from early childhood education to high standards, reading instruction to student test scores.

"But we'll make no progress in any area," Riley said, "unless we make teaching a first-class profession." To that end, he proposed, among other things, a new model for teacher licensure and compensation.

Soon after his speech, Riley spoke to NEA Today*'s Bill Fischer and Andrea Shaffer in his Washington, D.C., office.*

Joe Di Dio

Richard Riley

The Big Picture

What's wrong with the current system of licensing teachers?
Too many potential teachers are turned away because of the cumbersome process that requires them to jump through hoops—and lots of them.

Too many veterans tell me that the process of maintaining their license adds little value to their professional expertise. And too many of our best teachers are leaving the profession because of low pay and poor working conditions.

I've done a lot of thinking about this problem. It's very much a state and local issue, but I've proposed a three-part model to get folks thinking.

You call the first stage the "initial license."
Here's the idea: After passing a written exam of content and teaching knowledge and an assessment of teaching performance, a new teacher would be granted an initial license for up to three years.

During this "trial period," schools would offer new teachers annual contracts—and lots of nurturing, mentoring by more experienced peers, and professional development. New teachers too often have very large, very difficult classes, and a lot of idealism can be lost in a year.

Next, teachers would earn a "professional license."
Yes. The standards for this new license, developed at the state level, would be higher than those for an initial license and would involve peer review by a panel of teachers and a supervisor. This license would be renewed periodically and bolstered with strong professional development.

When teachers earn this license, they would be considered professionals and should be paid accordingly.

And, finally, the "advanced license."
The last part of my proposal would be a voluntary advanced license, such as the certification now available through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. If teachers reach this advanced license, compensation should be significantly increased.

What's the advantage of the new system?
A system like this one will improve the quality of our nation's teaching force and make it easier to convince the public of the need for higher salaries.

On another topic, how can NEA members help push for school modernization funds?
Well, the time is right. The country is in the shape to do it, and the need is there. I go into school buildings that are 60, 80, 100 years old.

I was in a school in New Jersey, and it was so musty there were eight or 10 children lined up for their asthma medication. The little area they had for a playground was filled up with trailers. And the school's one computer wasn't hooked up to the Internet because the old building wasn't wired.

That's a horrible way for teachers to teach and children to learn. Educators need to make that lesson heard. And others, like me, need to keep talking about the need for schools that can handle the coming enrollment increase, the needs of the community, the needs of disabled children, and the technological needs of the next century.

Why isn't the federal government contributing more to the cost of special education?
When public schools took on the job of educating disabled children, the goal was that the federal government would cover 40 percent of the total cost. If we went to the full 40 percent from where we are now, at $4.3 billion, we would need to increase spending in this area by $11 billion.

The whole budget for K-12 education is about $20 billion. So that's an enormous stretch. Still, we ought to go as far as we can in every way.

We've had tremendous increases—more than 10 percent each of the past three years—and I'm pleased with that. This year, with the caps pressing down on all the education needs, our budget calls for a $116 million increase in the area of special ed.

We have not proposed an increase for state IDEA grants. We felt that this year we would earmark the $116 million for prevention programs and make an all-out effort to pass our class size reduction measure, which also benefits children with special needs who spend a lot of time in regular classrooms.

Why fund class size reduction over special ed?
A well-qualified teacher who teaches in a small class can make an enormous difference for children who might not have to become part of the special education system.

If you get these children the help they need early, especially when it comes to reading, you can keep them from ever being labeled special ed in the first place.

Resources

- Single copies of *Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teachers* are available free from the U.S. Department of Education, ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794, 877/433-7827. On the Web: http://nces.ed.gov/.
- To read Secretary Riley's sixth annual State of American Education speech, delivered in Long Beach, California, on February 16, go to www.ed.gov/Speeches/02-1999/990216.html.
- For more information on IDEA regulations, updates on federal education legislation, and state-by-state allocations for school modernization, go to NEA's Web site at www.nea.org.

Debate

Is recess obsolete?

Yes

Armelia Williams works as a "teaching partner"—or paraprofessional—at Bear Creek Elementary School in St. Petersburg, Florida. A school district employee for 24 years, Williams is an active member of her local NEA affiliate, the Pinellas Educational Support Personnel Association.

Recess is an outdated concept that endangers our children's physical, emotional, and academic health.

"Free-play time," as we know it, should be eliminated because:

■ Recess isn't safe. There are too many students to watch and not enough staff to do the job adequately.

As a result, recess can be a breeding ground for overly aggressive students who act out hostilities in some very hurtful ways.

Over the years, on many different playgrounds, I've seen power struggles, fighting, and the reckless risk-taking that comes with showing off.

I've seen bloody noses, loose teeth, black eyes, and worse—all because some students interpret "free play" as a time for "anything goes" behavior.

I've seen kids experience the social stigma of being left out, teased unmercifully, or repeatedly denied a chance to use the monkey bars or play ball.

No matter what the rules, as long as there are only a few adults supervising hundreds of students, kids will continue to get physically and emotionally hurt.

■ In these years of school improvement plans, high-stakes tests, and reading recovery, recess is not the best use of time for students or staff.

Yes, students need physical activity. But 30 minutes per day—2 1/2 hours per week, perhaps as much as 100 hours per academic year—of wild behavior and questionable physical fitness activities steals valuable time away from more productive pursuits.

■ When the goal is helping our children become fit, physical education classes are a much better bet than recess. Phys ed classes are safe, properly supervised, and carefully planned.

Recess gives children a chance to run wild, but physical education classes give them a chance to run track. Which would you rather have your child do at school?

In phys ed classes, students have the chance to learn about all kinds of sports, plus health, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. Those are far more constructive lessons than the ones they learn at recess.

■ There are better ways to allow children to let off steam.

Children love to move. They run more than walk, they skip, jump, and even roll and crawl all over the floor and ground. Why not give kids a chance to use that youthful energy in a controlled setting?

Instead of recess, educators could create centers in classrooms, where students could go for constructive, properly supervised physical activities and games.

Students could rotate to different play stations, exercising their muscles—and their minds. And they could do it all in the classroom, with a teacher and teaching partner providing instruction and direction and ensuring safety.

■ As we round the corner toward the 21st century, it's time to admit that recess has outlived its usefulness and should be left behind.

Children have the right to play, but educators have a job to do. It's our responsibility to make sure that our students are playing and learning in safe, orderly environments.

Does your school's playground at recess pass that test?

No

Lynn Breckenfelder teaches health and physical education and coaches track and volleyball at Hubble Middle School in Wheaton, Illinois. Breckenfelder has a master's degree in public health and is working on her Ed.D, with a focus on gender issues in education. Her E-mail address: coachbreck@aol.com.

We're in the business of doing what's best for children. So we need to listen to public health officials, researchers, and medical professionals when they assure us that what's best for children is a combination of a quality daily physical education program and recess.

Here's the reasoning:

■ Children need daily physical activity, according to the most recent *Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health*. Daily physical activity reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, and obesity.

On days without physical education classes—there shouldn't be any!—recess becomes increasingly important. It may be a child's only chance for physical activity that day.

■ Children need unstructured, spontaneous movement. As a child, I remember climbing trees and playing kick-the-can. Today, our children go home to television, computer games, and a sedentary lifestyle.

But play, says Pete Egoscue, an exercise physiologist and author of *Pain Free*, is crucial to children's physical development.

"From a musculoskeletal standpoint," Egoscue writes, "the years between birth and the early twenties are important for building a solid foundation that ensures muscles and joints will operate properly for the rest of life."

Concludes Egoscue: "This happens only one way: unstructured, spontaneous movement."

■ Children need play to boost academic achievement. Research is unequivocal on this point: Kids who move are healthier, happier, and likely to be better learners than their sedentary peers.

Schools that insist children sit still for most of the day deny the connections between movement and learning, notes Jean Houston, a pioneer in human development theory.

It's simple: Physical activity "juices up the brain," providing more oxygen, which makes it easier for kids to be increasingly attentive and retain more information.

■ Children need recess *and*—not instead of—a quality, daily physical education program.

A quality physical education program strives to educate students in psychomotor skills—fitness, hand-eye coordination, and movement; cognitive skills—movement theory, principles, and strategies; and affective skills—cooperation, respect, tolerance, and sportsmanship.

In a good physical education class, constant learning occurs. The playing floor and field are perfect places for kids to observe, interpret, summarize, classify, hypothesize, and evaluate.

■ Children need play to maintain mental health and grow socially. Recess can help students relieve stress, reduce anxiety and depression, and improve self-esteem.

On the social side, recess provides a chance for children to get to know one another and make and keep friends. It also allows them to work in groups, disagree without fighting, and make decisions for themselves.

■ Children need play to become good citizens. To participate in a democracy, children need to learn how to get along with others in an unstructured area. Recess provides the arena.

What's Your Opinion?

Is recess obsolete?

To vote, visit our Web site at **www.nea.org/neatoday** and see the results instantly.

Should teachers and support staff have the right to suspend students?

The tally on this Debate question from the last issue of *NEA Today:*

58% Yes **42% No**

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Health Resources

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Can We Talk? is a parent-child communication curriculum by the NEA Health Information Network. *Can We Talk?* is an interactive workshop series designed to help parents foster the skills needed to communicate with their late elementary/middle school aged children about self-esteem, puberty, sexuality, mixed messages and peer pressure. Training package includes: video, workbook, manual, and more. Cost is $35. Contact 800/718-8387 or NEAHIN1@aol.com

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Resources

Ready or Not:
Talking to Kids About Alcohol
As part of an ongoing effort to educate NEA members about adolescent alcohol use, the NEA Helath Information Network is promoting a new program call *Ready or Not*, a community program of the Century Council in partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Designed for parents and other adult supervisors of kids ages 10-14, the program takes you through five steps needed to prevent underage drinking problems. A free video kit for use at home or in group workshops is available for **FREE** from the Century Council, 213/624-9898.

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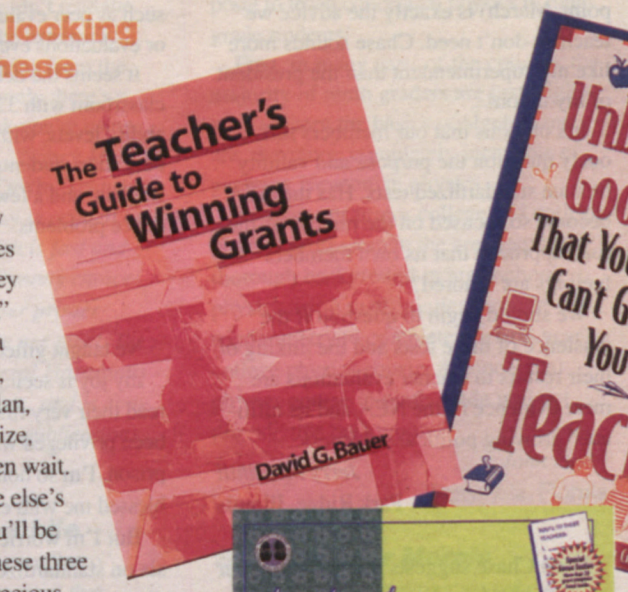
Books

Free Money? No Such Thing

But if you're looking for grants, these books are a bargain.


The Teacher's Guide to Winning Grants
David G. Bauer
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Unbelievably Good Deals That You Absolutely Can't Get Unless You're a Teacher
CHRISTENSEN
how to get
GRANTS AND FREE STUFF

Grants are really not free," writes a teacher. "They cost a lot of hard work."

If you want to snag a grant to help you teach, you've got to dream, plan, research, recruit, organize, meet, budget, write, then wait.

If you want someone else's money, you can bet you'll be investing your time. These three books may save you precious hours. Short of that, they may improve the odds that, if you take the time and make the effort, you'll succeed.

Unbelievably Good Deals That You Absolutely Can't Get Unless You're a Teacher

Barry Harrington, Beth Christensen. Contemporary Books, 274 pp., $12.95

Set-up: As the authors explain: "This is not so much a book as a directory of connections waiting to be made."

Best thing: *Good Deals* explains how to buy inexpensive rewards for your students, get "damaged and defective" books from publishers, plan author appearances, and understand ERIC. It also lists addresses of national landmarks, so you can write for information.

Worst thing: The authors never once warn readers to beware of strangers bearing gifts. Two examples: They list the American Forest and Paper Association as a source of a "free package on the history and making of paper and the preservation of the environment" and tell you how to get free nutrition lessons from, ahem, McDonalds.

How to Get Grants and Free Stuff

Teacher-to-Teacher Books. NEA Professional Library, 96 pp., $9.95

Set-up: Teachers in six different locations write about their successes in making connections to local businesses and winning grants.

Best thing: This book is written by teachers, for teachers. It's short, easy-to-read, and practical. The authors give tips on how to save time, when to ask for that donation (when you're making a purchase), and how to prepare budgets.

Worst thing: Think teachers who create wishing trees and collect used X-rays at the local hospital are just Martha Stewart wanna-bees? This book may not be for you.

The Teacher's Guide to Winning Grants

David G. Bauer. Jossey-Bass Publishing, 160 pp., $24.95

Set-up: An expert on grant writing reads you all the rules.

Best thing: Author David Bauer knows a lot about how methodical, organized work pays off. He has great ideas for making a grants workbook, involving community members as advisors, generating lots of possible solutions, and contacting grantors before submitting your proposal.

His prime directive is one teachers will find appealing: First recognize the needs of your students, then look for funding—not the reverse. Another plus: Lots of help in finding foundations and understanding government grants.

Worst thing: At times, this book reads like an late-night infomercial. It seems the perhaps-a-bit-too-slick author has a few other things to sell.

—*Stefanie Weiss*

New from the NEA Professional Library

Inspiring Tranquility: Stress Management and Learning Styles in the Inclusive Classroom. NEA Professional Library, 119 pp., $10.95, Stock #2592-6-00-F.

If you have too much stress to take the time to read a stress management book, this one's for you.

The authors—a teacher and a physical therapist who work in schools—have taken important findings from new research on how the brain works and created strategies that help teachers and students initiate the relaxation response in stressful classroom situations.

This book combines stress management and learning styles for a unique approach to teaching in an inclusive setting. After reading just the first few chapters, you'll be able to test the easy-to-follow strategies for inspiring tranquility in your own classroom.

For more information or to order, call 800/229-4200. On the Web at www.nea.org/books.

EXCERPT

The class had a variety of struggling students. Some had ADHD, some had behavior disorders and learning disabilities, some had poor attendance, and others had no support at home. . . .

I taught them how to identify physical tension and how to alleviate or reduce it. I introduced them to learning styles and showed them how to use alternate classroom accommodations to increase their efficiency in learning. It didn't take long for most of the students to warm up to the concepts.

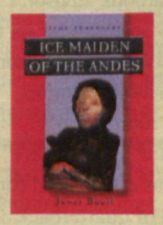
Books by NEA Members

All Eyes Up Here! ***A Portrait of Effective Teaching.*** Tee Carr. *Phase II: Publications, 276 pp., $14.95 plus $2 s&h to Carr Enterprises, #3 Belvoir Circle, Chattanooga, TN 37412.* An educator tells stories of good teaching that "will tug at your heart and make you laugh, cry—and think." Also by Carr: *How Come the Wise Men are in the Dempster Dumpster,* $14.95 plus $2 s&h.

A Chair Full of Heart Vicky Cavin. *Hara Publishing, 60 pp., $16.95 plus $3.50 s&h, 800/461-1931.* A lyrical, illustrated account of a daughter's relationship with her mother, as it changes over time. Mother's Day gift, anyone?

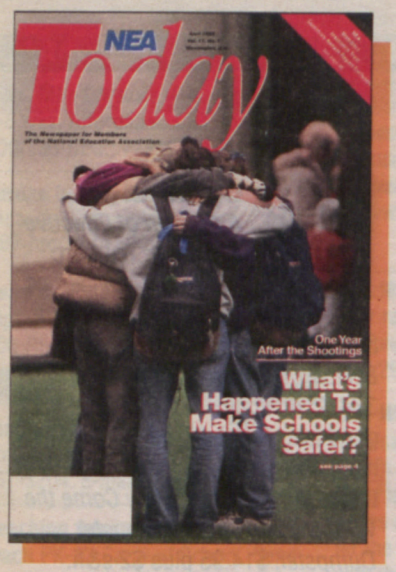
Discovering Decimals ***Through Cooperative Learning.*** Laura Candler. *Kagan Cooperative Learning, 172 pp., $20 plus $5 s&h, CA residents add 7.75 percent sales tax, 800/933-2667.* Activities for students in grade 3-8. Includes ready-to-use blackline masters. Also by Candler: *Cooperative Learning & Wee Science,* $25 plus $6 s&h.

Nine Months At $90 Ruth Kohrt. *200 pp., $15 plus $3 s&h to Wesley Acres Gift Shop, 3520 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312.* An NEA member recalls her 13 years of teaching in a one-room school in rural Iowa.



Ice Maiden of the Andes Janet Buell. *21st Century Books, 64 pp., $16.95, 888/330-8477.* For students in grades 5-8, this text discusses the 1995 discovery of the 500-year-old remains of a young Inca girl. Find out what techniques researchers used to discover her past and unravel the mystery of the mummy.

Letters



Inspiration

Thank you for your article on Eleanor Bralver, the 86-year-old health teacher (People, April). She's my hero! Eleanor has more energy and enthusiasm than anyone I know. She's an inspiration to all of us "youngsters"—I'm 49—who wonder how we'll make it to the end of the week!

Cathy Hicks
Carlsbad, California

Going to the Mat

I found it rather ironic that one day after I read about Minnesota Lt. Governor Mae Schunk's teaching career in *NEA Today* (People, April), Governor Jesse Ventura spewed some ugly, anti-teacher rhetoric.

The Associated Press quoted Ventura commenting about teachers who say they're underpaid. "They're doing all right," Ventura said. "Multiply it into a full year. How many days off do they get? Every other month, there's a teacher this, a teacher that. They're off school for this, off school for that."

Is this Ventura's idea of giving the voters what they want?

Charles Harder
Eagan, Minnesota

Academic Freedom

I commiserate with Derrick Neill and the battle over censorship in his classroom (My Turn, April). As yearbook advisor, I came under attack in my second year for a photograph of a boy and a girl, posing for the "Most Humorous" Senior Favorites, by standing in the boys' room.

The following year, the attacks were more preposterous. I was disciplined for including a photograph of quarterback Brett Favre in the yearbook—the year the Packers won the Super Bowl and the school held a Packer rally in the gym.

After that straw, this camel walked to higher ground in a better school district.

Kim Fenske
Portage, Wisconsin

I haven't read Derrick Neill's book, so I can't comment on its content—or on why some parents wanted to ban it.

But I was bothered that a teacher who claims to fight "for public schools that allow all voices to be heard" also believes that teacher-sponsored religious clubs and theories other than evolution have no place in public education.

A true champion of intellectual freedom should make room for all avenues of thought, not just his own.

Richard Towry
Elgin, Illinois

Suspension Support

It's tempting to say that teachers and support staff should be able to suspend students (Debate, April), but often the incident precipitating the decision to suspend is an emotional one.

I wouldn't want to be the teacher who's brought up on charges, valid or not, of violating a student's civil rights. Let's hope teachers who make the call have supportive administrators, willing to stand behind them.

Robert Ritzer
Bergenfield, New Jersey

Teaching to the Test

Bemoaning the fact that we have to "teach to the test" undermines our competency as professional educators (Cover story, March). Any teacher worth his or her salt knows you don't "teach to the test." You teach to the objective.

A fundamental principle in the teaching-learning process is instructional alignment. The objectives have to be clearly defined, and content material, classroom activities, and tests must be consistent with the objectives.

If we are to be held accountable for student academic achievement, we must, at the very minimum, know what students are to know and be able to do, be given adequate resources to teach, and be assured that assessments are appropriate to the objectives.

Jack Gallegos
Englewood, Colorado

Don't Get Mad?

Bob Chase's "quit your crying and get these kids ready" stance on standardized tests (President's Viewpoint, March) is exactly the advice we teachers don't need. Chase sounds more like my superintendent than the president of my union!

It's obvious that our members seriously question the purpose and validity of state standardized tests. Has the NEA become so focused on the middle-of-the-road approach that its own members' feelings are ignored?

We should begin to question if the existence of these tests and the linking of their results to teacher evaluations are mere evidence of the NEA and its affiliates' growing political weakness.

Jerry Mulvihill
Park Ridge, Illinois

Bob Chase suggests that we shrug our shoulders and make the best of the bad reality we've been handed by policy makers rallying around high standards and high-stakes tests.

I believe educators lost this war when we took John Dewey's works on American education out of our souls and put them on library shelves. To Dewey, democratic practices should be part of the warp and weave of institutional life for young people. And, more remarkably, institutions must be ready to redefine their mission and practices based on the needs of each cohort of students.

Chase says, "Don't get mad, get ready!" I suggest just the opposite: Get mad, get really mad, and strive to take over the rhetoric of education reform in ways that are just and humane, and can help children become just and humane.

David Asia
Mount Vernon, Washington

Tests and Evaluations

The debater who thinks student test scores should be used to evaluate teachers has a very limited, naive view (Debate, March).

If a principal doesn't have the will to evaluate teachers properly, the principal should receive a poor evaluation.

If principals don't have time to evaluate teachers, they should use other methods, such as peer evaluation, taped evaluations, or evaluations every other year.

It seems the debater has never been in a classroom with 32 students of various ability levels, with a mixture of special education students, a few who don't speak English, and a few discipline and attendance problems.

K. Lindstrom
Portland, Oregon

I've taught gifted students in the past, but my joy is seeing older students learn to read their very first words. It's as if I've been privileged with releasing them from prison. I'm so honored that God has blessed me with excellent results.

But I'm worried that the over-emphasis on standardized test scores will affect these students in the future (Debate, March). Will educators continue to help slow learners if their evaluations are contingent on the test scores of sixth graders who recently learned to read?

Natalie Vinyard
Hemet, California

New teachers are under extreme pressure. They don't have the support network or the experience of their colleagues, yet they are often given the students who are poor achievers, apathetic, and behavior problems.

To evaluate new teachers based on student test scores—when veteran teachers sometimes hand-pick their students—is unfair and unprofessional. It's demoralizing and shouldn't be allowed.

Sheila Peter
Campti, Louisiana

About Those Worms

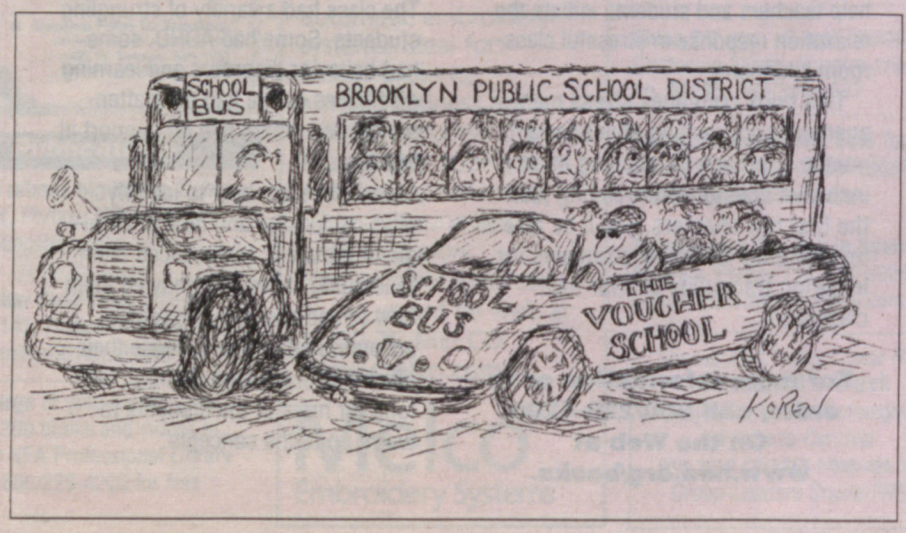
It upsets me that there has been so much publicity surrounding the principal who promised to eat worms if his students read 10,000 books (Newsmakers, March). It diminishes the seriousness of our mission and makes a laughing stock of our profession. I support a sense of fun, but humor with integrity should be our hallmark.

Barbara Brahaney
Bolton, Connecticut

Puleeze, don't publicize the stupid things educators and administrators promise to get students to read. What's wrong with reading for pleasure? Students need to learn to find pleasure in learning by themselves.

Life is much more pleasant and meaningful if you can make your job more enjoyable. But that's not the job of your boss or your administrator or your teacher or your parents.

Joanne Goodrich
Lead, South Dakota



Stinky Ink?

Since I'm a member of my school's Indoor Air Quality team, I was interested to see an article on the topic (Newsmakers, March). But I couldn't read the entire article because of the extremely strong, unpleasant odor rising from the pages of the magazine. Surely there's a better alternative to the ink you're using.

Nancy McNeal
Doyle, Tennessee

Editor's note: NEA Today *is printed on a rotogravure press, which is fast and economical. There aren't many choices of compatible inks. But our printer assures us that the ink we use meets the standards set by the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, is nontoxic, and is commonly used in many other publications every day.*

Get a Laugh, Get a Life

I must take exception to your "zero" rating of the chip commercial that pictures teachers in the faculty lounge, munching and singing while students go wild (Heroes & Zeroes, March). I think the commercial is a clever and hilarious take on an old tune, with no malice toward teachers intended.

It seems you lost your sense of perspective, as well as your sense of humor. With all due respect, if teachers lose their sense of humor, they'll become . . . well, they'll become lawyers!

Mary Parkin
Phoenix, Arizona

Surely there must be bigger educational "zeroes" than the people who produce chip commercials. The commercial was a joke! Where's your sense of humor?

It's objecting to innocuous displays like this ad that makes NEA members look like irrational, rabid, educratic pit bulls. Well, that's not who I am.

I'm a veteran educator who, despite finding much to cry about in public education, has retained the ability to laugh—even at myself.

William Lindsey
Mountainburg, Arkansas

Why Make Parents Pay?

Laws that make parents pay are double-edged swords (Rights Watch, March). Sure, many parents don't act responsibly when it comes to trying to control their children, but there are many good parents who try to intervene but are trumped by state laws and courts.

I know of at least three sets of parents who put their out-of-control kids in behavior modification programs against the youngsters' will. Child protective agencies investigated the parents for kidnapping and child abuse.

What's a decent parent to do?

Karen Richards
Snohomish, Washington

Laws of Physics

There are merits to Leon Lederman's ideas (Innovators, March), but there are two serious problems with his proposal to teach conceptual physics to ninth grade students.

First, in many parts of the country, the majority of ninth graders are just beginning to learn the basics of algebra and are, therefore, completely incapable of grasping Newtonian physics.

Second, our junior college and college physics professors in the area require a thorough background in high school physics using mathematics through trigonometry to complete the first-year college physics course. A conceptual physics course in ninth grade will not provide this background.

John Hood
Pensacola, Florida

Searching for Morals

A previous letter-writer says she's appalled that public school districts across the country would protect gay and lesbian teachers and students from harassment and discrimination (Letters, March).

As an openly gay educator, I stress that everyone in my classroom deserves to be treated with respect. No one needs to suffer put-downs because their beliefs are different.

This year, an openly gay student at a high school north of San Francisco received threats on his life and that of his family and was repeatedly attacked. On February 12, he was severely beaten and had the word "fag" carved into his stomach and arm.

To say that schools don't need to protect their gay and lesbian students represents to me an immoral viewpoint. Everyone deserves a safe environment. Everyone deserves to be treated fairly and with dignity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, color, religious affiliation, or sexual orientation.

That's the moral high ground our country was founded on.

Peter Konrath
West Bend, Wisconsin

Let's Talk

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of five ways:

- By mail: Write to Letters, NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
- Through the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday and click on "Submit a Letter to the Editor"
- By E-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org
- By Fax: 202/822-7206
- By Phone: 202/822-7201

Letters are edited for length and clarity.

A Letter from: Pinellas County, Florida

The Blessings of Liberty?

By Linda Manning

When I started teaching a quarter of a century ago, I made myself a promise. In my classroom, I vowed, someone would always be having fun, even if that someone was me.

Some 7,500 students later, teaching economics and government to five sections of sleep-deprived seniors still keeps me on my toes. I take any charge of boredom not as an insult, but as a personal challenge.

Scanning current events and popular culture, I constantly update instructional materials. It's extra work, but it brings me joy—and it helps my students learn. By being adaptive, I've kept faith with my promise to have fun on a daily basis, but lately it's getting harder.

Monday, September 21, was not a fun day. President Clinton's sworn testimony before a federal grand jury was released by the House Judiciary Committee. Since I was teaching American National Government, I arranged to have it taped, and I prepared permission slips for the 17 seniors and one junior in the class to take home to their parents.

That very day, my principal interrupted all school events to read a transmission from the district office prohibiting any use of Clinton's testimony in our schools.

There were no qualifiers, no caveats. It was total prohibition, and we all got the message.

The constitutional scholar in me was incensed. How could my school district—the one I taught in, the one I attended as a child—issue an edict so blatantly disrespectful of teachers' professional judgment?

Plowing ahead, I told my principal I was sending home permission slips with every intention of using the taped testimony and the Starr Report at my professional discretion with my government class.

I was told no, the material was "sexually explicit," and I was not to use it.

So I contacted the Pinellas County Teachers Association, NEA-FTP and filed a lawsuit against the school board. I'm not seeking monetary damages. I'm seeking to regain the professional dignity and discretion that was stripped from me, other teachers here, and thousands of teachers before me. I'm seeking my constitutional right to freedom of speech.

As conflict-averse as we educators often are, this is one struggle we must all join. How can public school teachers teach the blessings of liberty without first securing our own?

It's no leap to call this affront to our professionalism yet another threat to our survival. Teachers are becoming a eunuch caste, incapable of reproducing the next generation of teachers.

The Boomers, flush from the countercultural revolution and willing to forego financial rewards, filled the 1970s demand for teachers. What's to attract the Gen Xers to take their place?

The classroom as haven of academia doesn't exist. It has devolved over the past decades, thanks to legislative micro managing, inclusion bingeing, bureaucratic bulimia, curriculum tinkering du jour, all the acronyms of accountability, budgetary betrayals, and broken promises.

As a result, we have teacher shortages. Sooner, not later, the scarcity will be profoundly felt, logically exacerbated by the stealth voucher virus in its many mutations.

American school boards and their constituencies must join with teacher organizations to enhance teaching's status, esteem, and professionalism—not squash it further into the ground.

We must be trusted to do the jobs we were hired to do, including the selecting, authoring, and designing of materials. And if we don't receive that trust, we must fight for it.

As I wait for the courts to hear my case, I still hope that my school board will take the opportunity to lead in the affirmation that education is a labor-intensive industry, and quality labor merits greater respect.

It might help with recruiting and retaining teachers, too. And it might make our jobs more fun.

Linda Manning teaches government at East Lake High School in Pinellas County, Florida. She can be reached at manninglinda@yahoo.com.

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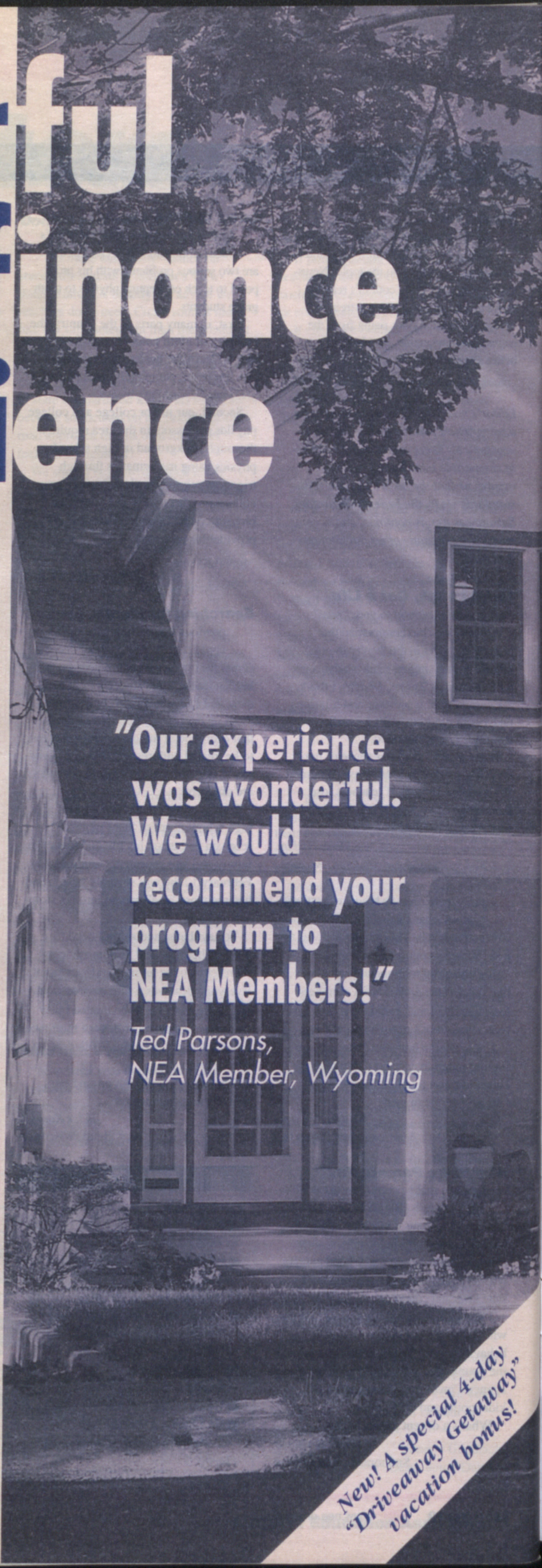

"Our experience was wonderful. We would recommend your program to NEA Members!"
Ted Parsons,
NEA Member, Wyoming
New! A special 4-day "Driveaway Getaway" vacation bonus!

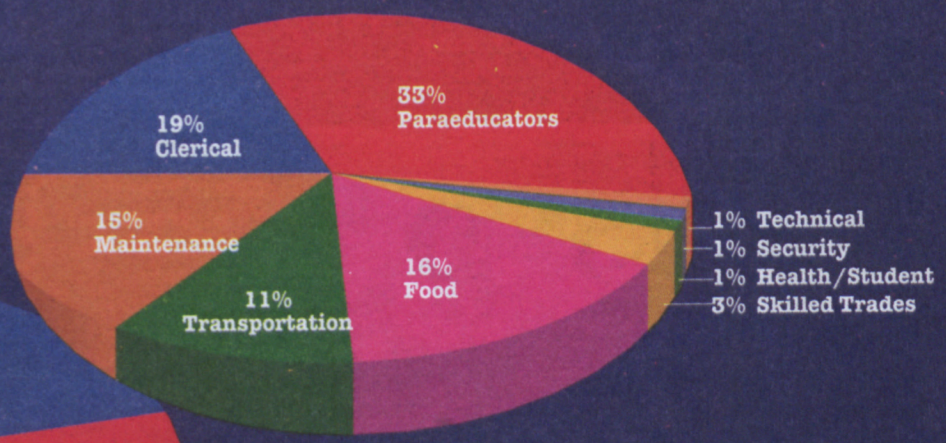
Who We Are

Karen Mahurin, left, fills many roles as a secretary at Sears Elementary School, in Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

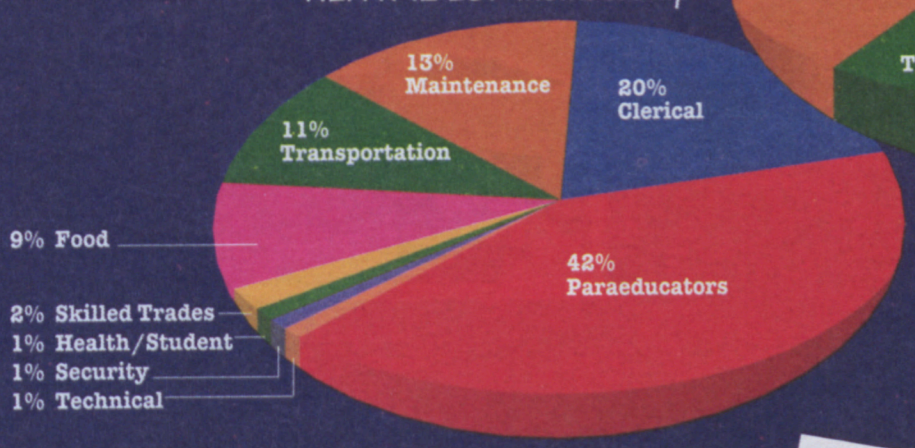
Their job descriptions may vary greatly, but school support personnel generally work in one of nine job categories. On average, today's support staffers have worked in the same school district for a number of years, and much of their work requires special education and training.

Job Groups of the NEA K-12 ESP Membership and the U.S. K-12 ESP Work Force

U.S. K-12 ESP Membership



NEA K-12 ESP Membership



Above: NEA's membership includes more paras and fewer food service workers than the K-12 ESP workforce. Below right: on average, K-12 ESP have worked 11 years with their present employer. Below left, 55 percent of all NEA K-12 ESP members had to meet at least one specific training requirement to qualify for their position.

Percent Required To Have Special Certificates, Licenses, Classes, or College Credits To Qualify for Current Position

Average Number of Years in Educational Support Work and Average Number of Years with Current Employer

Where We Live

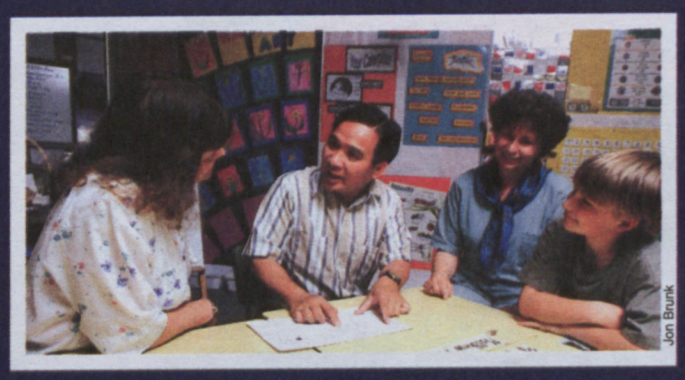
ESP often live in the same communities where they work, and most volunteer hours of their time to community service.

J. Breck Smithers

Maintenance worker Beverly Joseph believes strong ESP membership helps to strengthen public schools in her Magoffin County, Kentucky, community.

Andy Lavalley

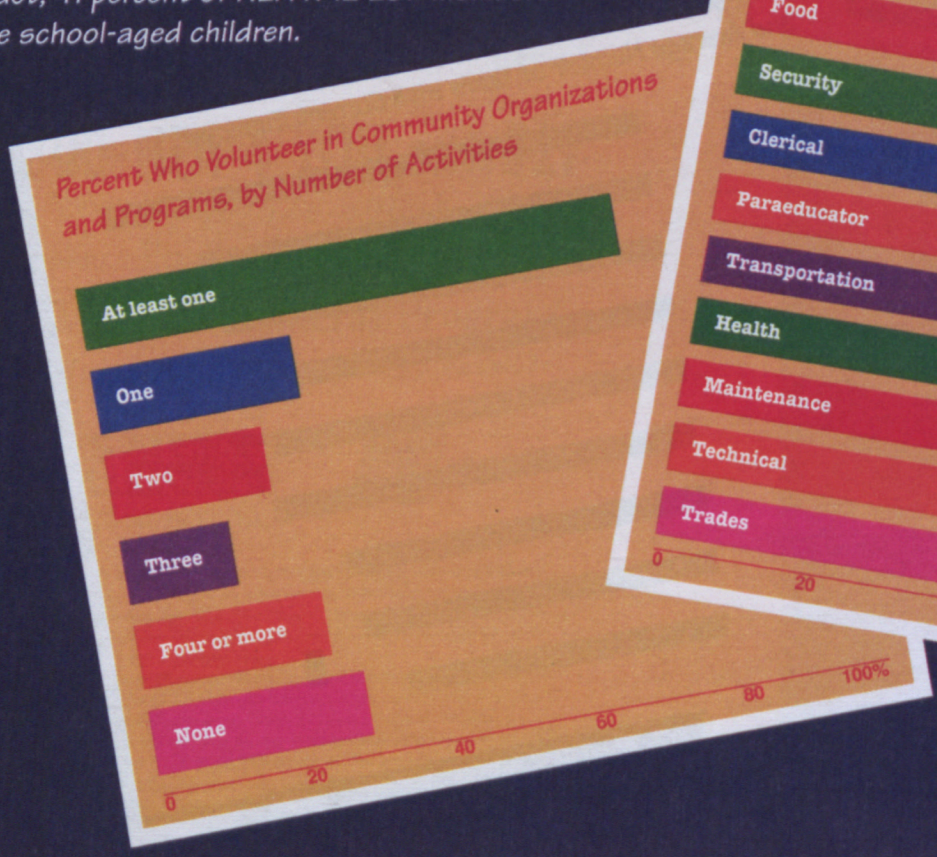
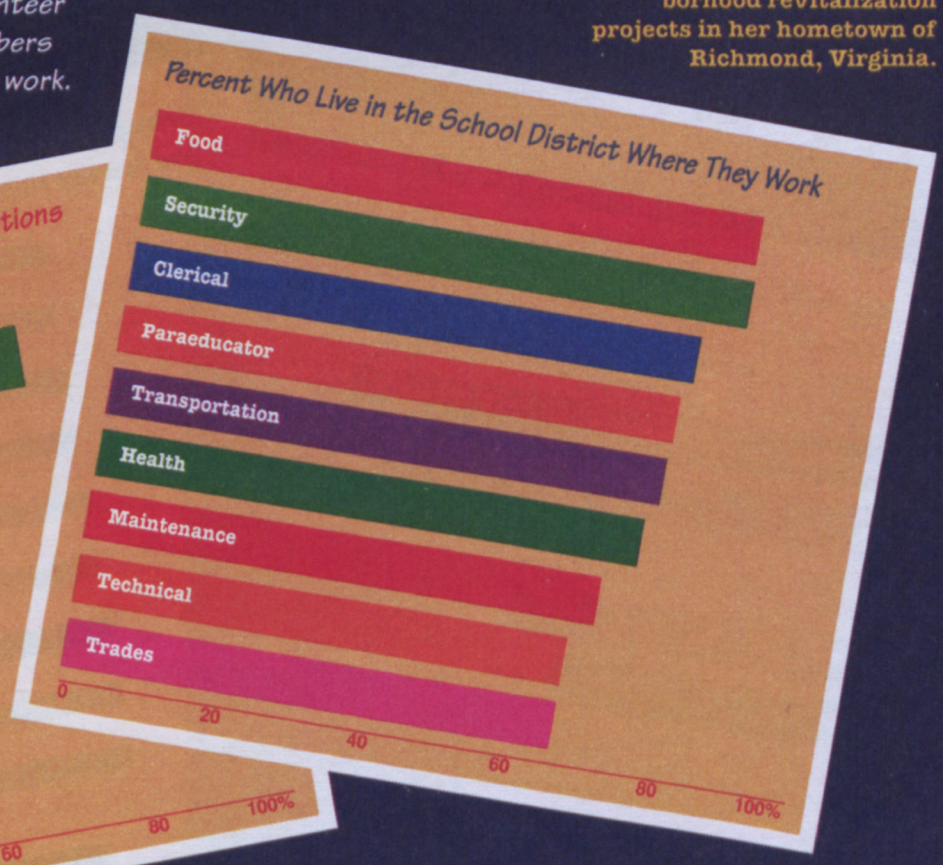
Darrell Walker, a maintenance worker in Springfield, Illinois, is always ready to volunteer in his community.



Jon Brunk

Cuong Truong, an instructional assistant in the Bellingham (Washington) School District, often meets with parents to go over student progress.

Joe Mahoney

Mary Thompson, a school secretary, is active in neighborhood revitalization projects in her hometown of Richmond, Virginia.

More than half of all ESP have lived in their communities for at least 20 years. So it's clear—based on home addresses (below right) and hours of volunteer community service (below left)—that ESP members know the students and parents with whom they work. In fact, 41 percent of NEA K-12 ESP members have school-aged children.